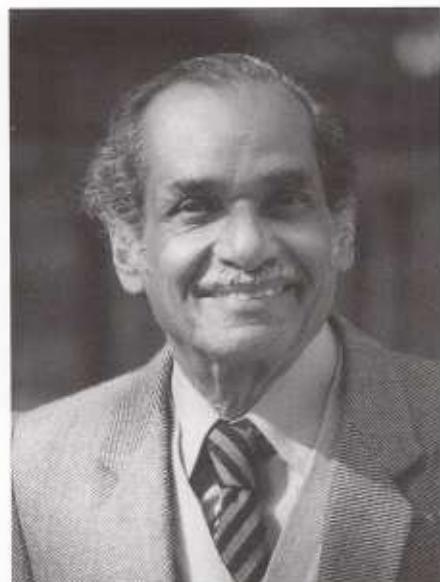


# ACHYUT KANVINDE

KANVINDE COMMEMORATION VOLUME

Editors: Sharvey Dhongde Chetan Sahasrabudhe  
BNCA Publication Cell



**ACHYUT KANVINDE**  
Architect

*Achyut Kanvinde*

*'Over the years, I have come to believe that it is imperative that an architect develops a sensitivity to human nature and respect for human values. This, after all, is at the very core of his work.'*

*Cecilynt P. Kanvinde*



The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur



## FOREWORD

Dr. Anurag Kashyap  
Principal, BNCA



It gives me immense pleasure to present the first book of the BNCA Publication Cell. It has been our long standing dream to make the Cell a source of valuable and quality academic publications and with this book we begin our journey towards that goal. We are filled with a sense of pride that our first publication is about the doyen of modern Indian architecture, Shri Achyut Kanvinde, a Guru to most in the architectural fraternity. Our pride is doubled by the fact that this book is being released by none other than Ar Balkrishna Doshi, another founder of contemporary Indian architecture.

The Kanvinde Commemoration Volume is part of the Kanvinde Memorial Lecture Series launched by BNCA from this year. It is a small gesture on the part of the institute to pay its respects to the first Indian Master. It is intended that this lecture series mooted by Prof Arun Ogale goes on to become a renowned platform for established practitioners and thinkers as well as deserving freshers in the field of design in its largest

sense to present their works and ideas.

The Kanvinde Commemoration Volume largely comprises of three sections viz. Kanvinde's biography, his works and writings and tributes paid to him by his contemporaries. We have sourced the material from various people and organizations and are deeply thankful to all of them for their contribution. It is unfortunate that the works of such a significant man have gone mostly undocumented and archived. We hope to make a beginning and at a later date to take up a documentation project of a few of his works.

I hope this book, even though a very modest attempt to capture the personality of a giant of a man is received well by its readers. Your support and readership is something the BNCA Publication Cell looks forward to.

## **EDITORIAL**

Sharvey Dhongde

It is always difficult to capture a complete personality with all its nuances in any medium- print or film. One can employ page after page to bring forth the qualities of a person, but one is always aware that the exact representation remains elusive. The task of encapsulating a personality in few pages of a book becomes even more difficult and challenging when one is working on a multi faceted person like architect Achyut P Kanvinde. Many have written about him, many of his works are published and many interviewers have reported elaborate conversations with him. But still, one is left wanting to know more about this very unassuming petite old man who has a larger than life aura for connoisseurs of architecture.

The fact that he belongs to an age prior to the age of media hype and self promotion makes him even more of an enigma. For someone whose career has spanned more than six decades, the work produced speaks loud and clear. And as far as Kanvinde's work is concerned it

is no ordinary projects but path breaking and trend setting achievements those have dotted his entire professional course. It would be an understatement to call him a stalwart of modern architecture in India. Not only has his work transcended vagaries of styles, gimmickry of structure, opportunistic adoption of any philosophy or dogmatic confirmation to any ism, but he has continuously evolved over projects not getting trapped in any self image nor laurels or titles. He has made his own path, informed by multiple sources from Gropius to the Bhagwadgeeta and Jawaharlal Nehru to Vergeese Kurien. He has imbibed their spirits and found his own, only to inspire more than a generation of practitioners and students. His work has been keenly followed, though not formally documented, and has become one of the cornerstones of contemporary modern architecture in India. But still, it would be adventurous to claim that one has understood Kanvinde and his work in their full sense.

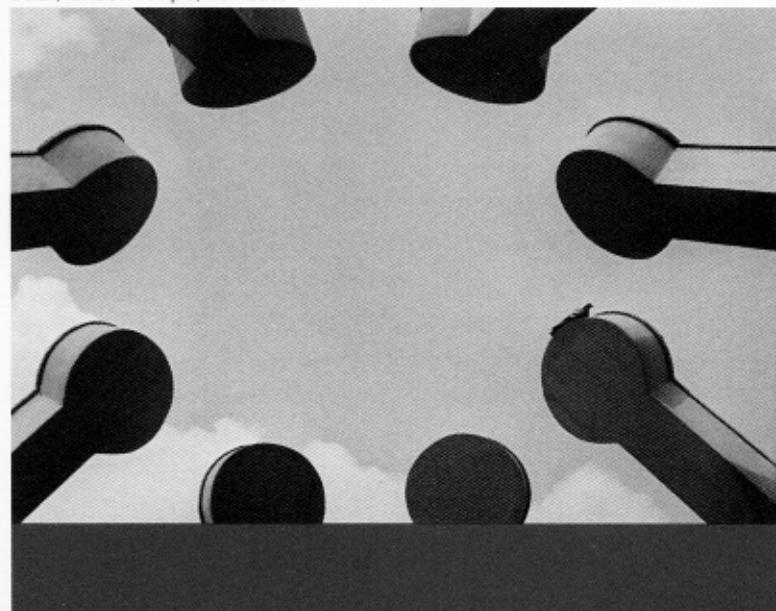
Putting together this volume has been an enjoyable and satisfying experience to both of us. One cannot but realize Kanvinde's intellectual rigour and his mastery as a form maker. The influence of Prof Claude Batley in his student days through his studies in Indian classical architecture is also apparent in his work, especially in his later projects which are a fine and mature blend of his Harvard training and Indian studies. The following pages of this commemorative publication attempt to catch a small glimpse of this complex personality. Through the memoirs of his contemporaries and the reflections of the current generation, through his own hand drawn sketches and excerpts of his writings, through the projects that became landmarks and the dreams that remained unrealized, this book tries to consolidate one more image of the legendary person. The lack of a single narrative binding the book, other than the fact that everything is about Kanvinde, is intentional. The idea is to look at the shimmering light on the sea and gauge the brilliance of the sun.

Architectural practices though tempered by individual architects, especially its principals, should over time institutionalize themselves, and last much beyond their founding fathers. It is sad to lose the knowledge and experience gained and a design culture evolved over years with the passing away of its founders. The practice of Kanvinde Rai and Choudhary (KRC) continues to work today with the next generation of principals without compromising on its core values. Acknowledging this important phenomenon, we have included a few projects of the office,

post Achyut Kanvinde. The continuity and departures are for everyone to see and appreciate.

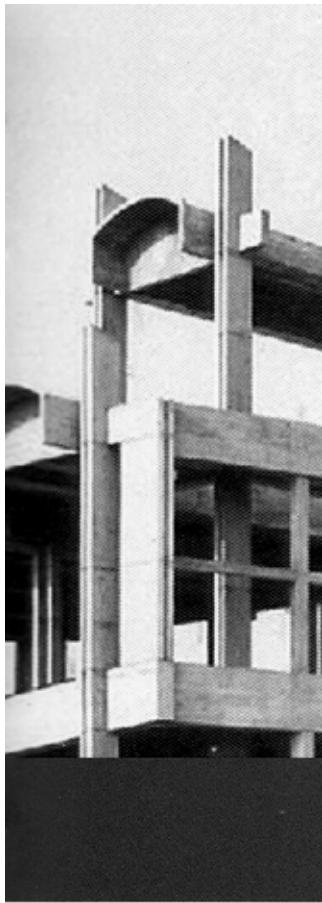
The material published herein is sourced from numerous sources, all of whom have treasured it for long. We are especially thankful to Ar Sanjay Kanvinde for sharing this treasure with us. Ar Vikram Hundekar's contribution has also been very valuable. We are also thankful to all contributors to this book whose lucid penmanship has added value to this compilation. And we are more than thankful to Rashmi Ranade whose design sensibilities have made communication of the book's much effective than words. Our support group has been large and varied. Special mention must be made of our Principal Dr Anurag Kashyap, Ar Vinay Khandekar and Ar Arun Ogale. It was Prof. Ogale's dream to commemorate Kanvinde who has been his idol throughout his career. We hope this book along with the memorial lecture series serve as an apt tribute from him. Last, but not the least, speaking singularly for a change, I express my gratitude to my co-editor Chetan Sahasrabudhe, without whom this book would never have happened the way it is.

Detail, ISKCON Temple, New Delhi





Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand



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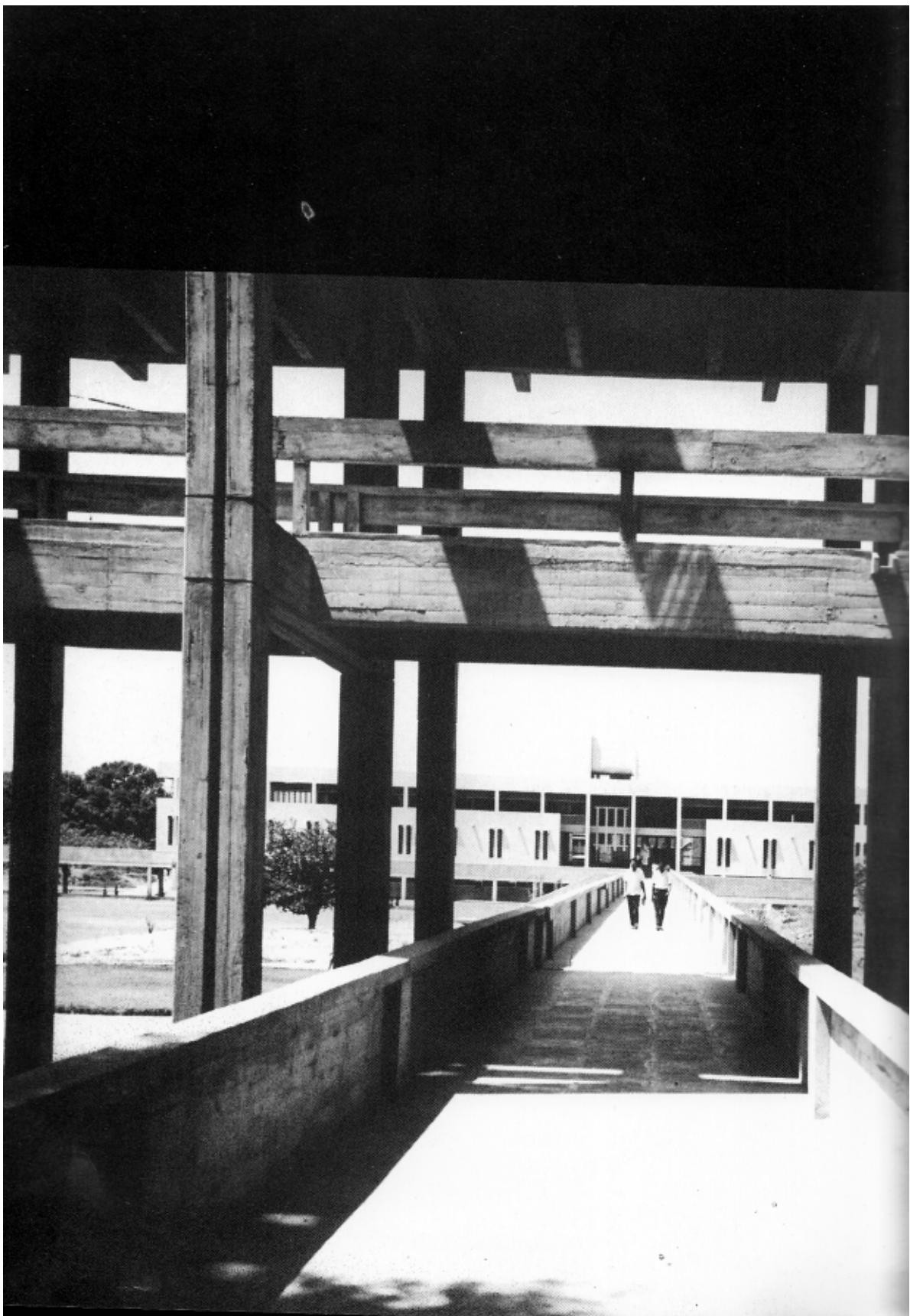
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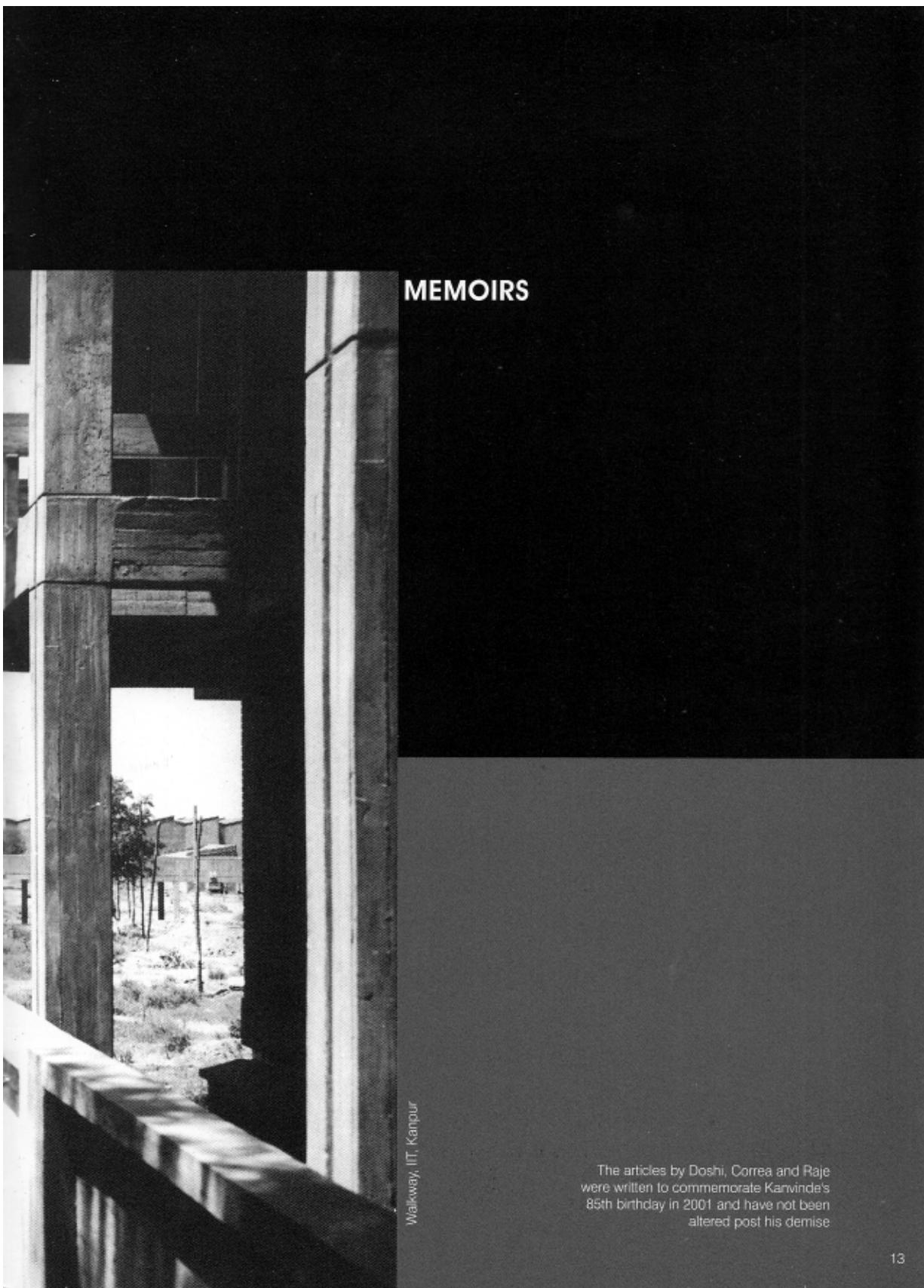
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The articles by Doshi, Correa and Raje  
were written to commemorate Karvinde's  
85th birthday in 2001 and have not been  
altered post his demise



Model, ISKCON Temple, New Delhi

## **THE FIRST MASTER OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE**

Balkrishna Doshi



Recently when I visited Kanvinde at his home, as I have been doing for more than thirty years, I did not realise that soon he would be eighty five. Kanvinde's persona and the timelessness of his home built more than thirty years ago make time stand still. On that day, the manner of his attending the door, his welcoming gestures, sprightly but slightly slow movements, gentle smile and hospitality reminded me of our first meeting in Pune almost 50 years ago. He has aged but only in appearance. His curiosity, patience to listen to others and subsequent reflections are still the same. It is no wonder that this is reflected in his work even today.

Kanvinde's house built in late 60's reflects his eternal search for innovations in space, form and light. His generous nature is reflected in his large spacious volumes, his desire to interrelate life in its varied aspects. The use of materials in the house show his constantly exploring attitude and his choices push further the reinterpreted sense of purpose.



ATIRA, Ahmedabad

I remember that in 1951 Le Corbusier visited Kanvinde's ATIRA building, then under construction in Ahmedabad, to see how buildings in reinforced concrete were constructed using traditional skills. Corbusier was fascinated. When the ATIRA building was completed, Ahmedabad got its first, modern building built by a Harvard graduate and a Walter Gropius student.

Over time, Kanvinde's architecture has evolved a great deal from the first International style buildings to more Indian modern expressions. The evolution of his work shows how much he must have reflected on climate, light, ventilation, and how much he cares for good maintenance and for changing Indian life styles.

In the design of his private houses, his focus becomes the family space with the spaciously interconnected central room and its lofty heights. The terraces become the summer rooms in Ahmedabad and parasols protect the terrace as in Balkrishna Harivallabhdas House. At larger scales, his campus for Indian Institute of Technology in Kanpur is distinguished by separated vehicular and pedestrian connections running along large public courts. His recent plan for the Dronagiri node took this further and

exploited the low level water channels. This shows that for Kanvinde every project is site, climate and function specific.

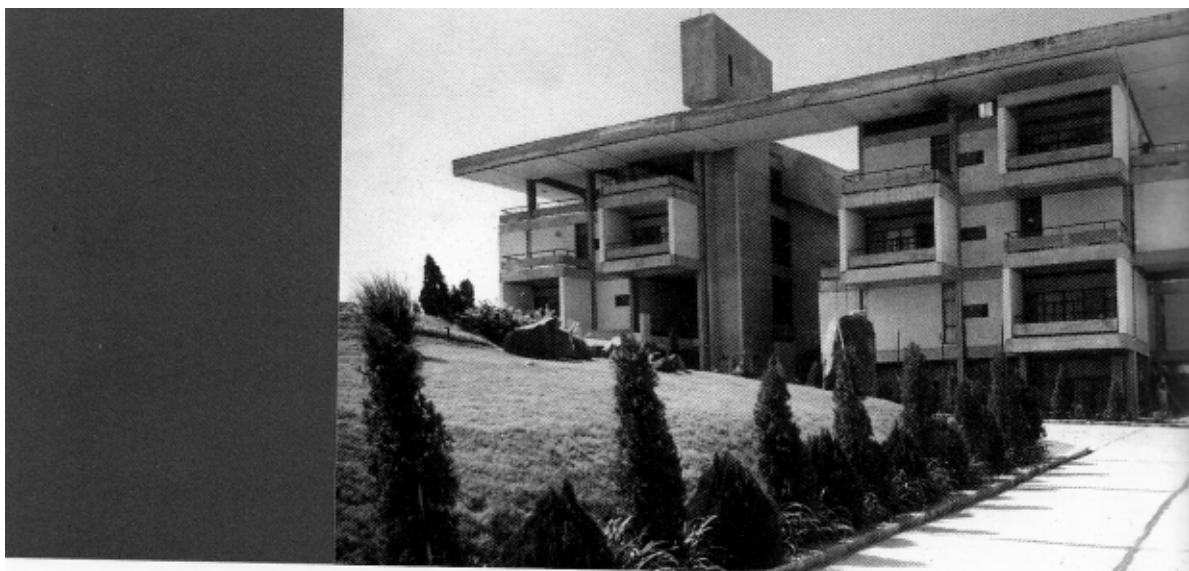
As a pioneer of integrated modern design in India, Kanvinde always extended the domain of design and has designed excellent furniture and fixtures for private and public buildings. Thus he carried the spirit of modern design from the macro to micro scales.

In the best tradition of a great pioneer, Kanvinde has not confined himself to just practice. He has been involved with the Indian Institute of Architects as its President and taught and lectured at several foreign Universities. Thus, Kanvinde has also shown great concern for the development of the profession in India. Most recently his desire to develop new educational system in the present context led him to chair the Committee of the recently established TVB school in Delhi.

To be helpful to individuals, especially younger professionals is Kanvinde's lesser known virtue. Just as in 1950, when he gave me an introductory note so that I could meet the great avant-guard British architect Bertold Lubetkin, Kanvinde has supported many architects to set up their practice. Many architects of my generation will always be grateful for his timely and personal support.

Truly the first gentleman of the profession in India, Kanvinde is of a delicate built with gentle eyes. He is a good listener and thoughtful conversationalist. I remember his drawings and water colour renderings which are always so soft and tender as if not to hurt the paper and the instruments. A devout man, Kanvinde has never hesitated to be generous with his guidance and advice to all who have approached him.

Self effacing and media shy, he has somehow kept out of limelight. This has made him rather unknown in the public and even amongst the young professionals. Somehow he has concentrated more on his own personal discovery and expression of his architecture rather than taking pictures of his work. As a result, the amount of work done by him with his partners Shaukat Rai and Murad Chaudhary remains largely unknown. If documented properly, I am sure, their work would truly show how Indian Architecture has evolved since Independence. I remember it was a Herculean task for James Belluardo to collect photographs, drawing and models of this firm's work for the Architect's League exhibition held in New



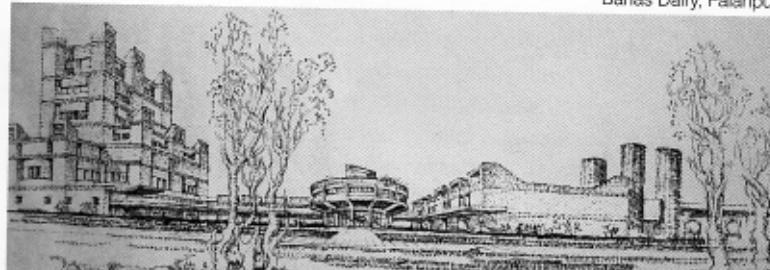
Gujarat Bhavan, New Delhi

York in 1997. Even so whatever was collected and presented made a great impact and Kanvinde was awarded the coveted Fellowship by American Institute of Architects in recognition of his work.

Kanvinde is a very warm human being, always concerned about his family, friends and even clients. Clients like Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, Shri Kasturbhai Lalbhai, other industrialists as well as Dr. V. J Kurien ultimately considered Kanvinde as their family member. Ahmedabad and Gujarat thus became his second home. For me and my family this has been a boon. While in Ahmedabad, Kanvinde is always our family guest. He also participated as a member of the first Advisory Board of CEPT. He often talked to the faculty and the students of the school and kind of acted as CEPT's well-wisher in Delhi.

Today, even at 85, he travels extensively to meet students, to give discourses on architecture and spends a considerable time on his projects. I believe that it is time that we recognise this doyen of Indian architecture who has pioneered contemporary architecture for Independent India and guided the lives of many. To that goal, it would be fitting on this occasion that we should celebrate Indian architecture by publishing a monograph of his work so that future generation in India and abroad realize the true worth of this pitamaha of sthapta in India. May he live a long active life!

Banas Dairy, Palanpur



## **UNIQUE SENSITIVITY**

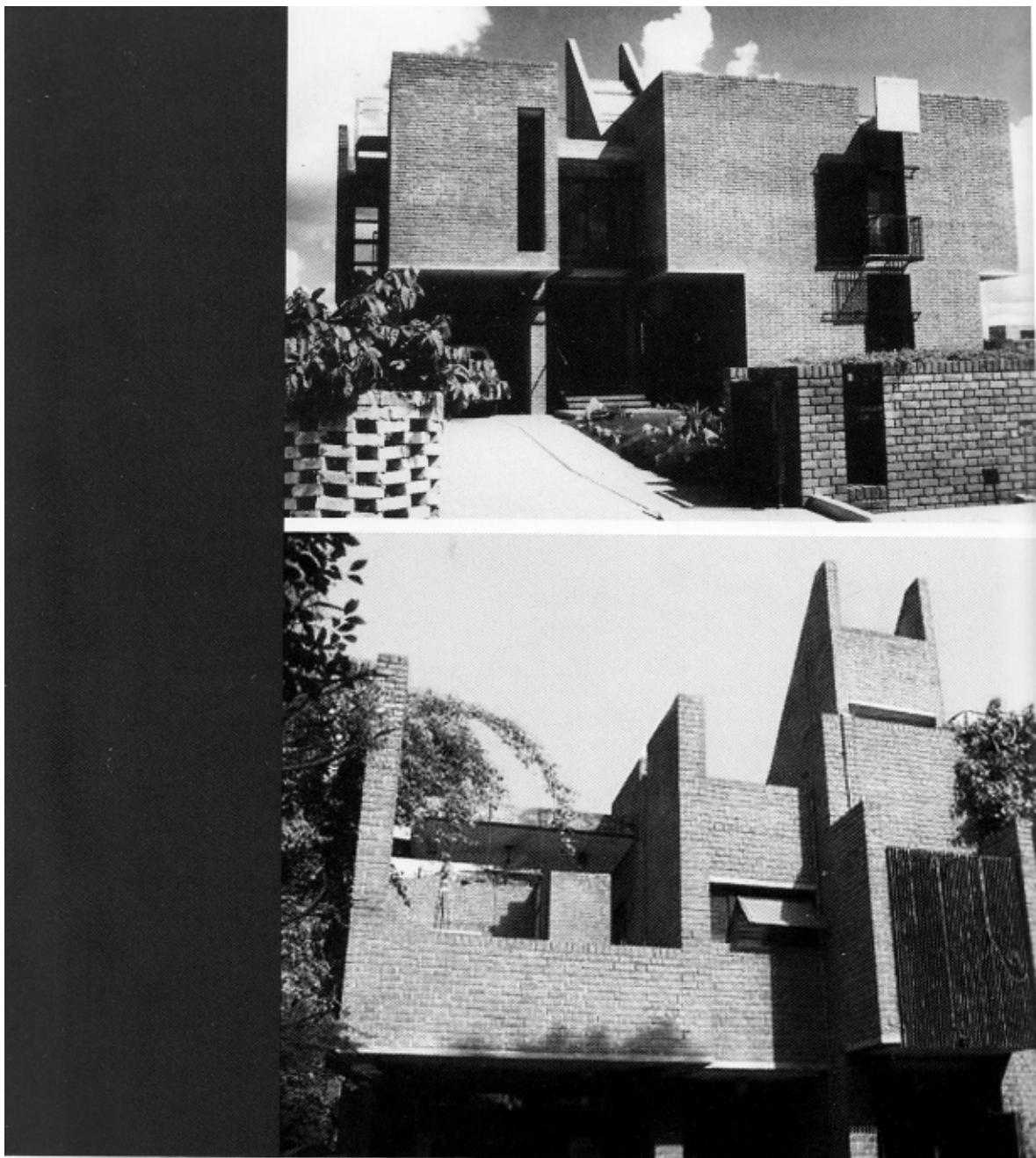
Charles Correa



Achyut Kanvinde occupies a unique position in the history of contemporary architecture in India. Along with Habib Rehman and Piloo Mody, he was one of the first three architects to return to post independent India, after studies in the United States.

Over the next five decades, Kanvinde created some of the most outstanding pieces of architecture produced in this country starting with the ATIRA laboratories in Ahmedabad, and going on to include the Indian Institute Of Technology at Kanpur, the Administrative & Research Center for Amul at Anand, and a wonderful series of houses- including the Balkrishna Harivallabhdas in Ahmedabad & his own residence in South Delhi. All these are extraordinarily sensitive variations on themes of space & materials which have occupied him for half a century.

In collaboration with his invaluable partner, Shaukat Rai, Kanvinde has made a decisive contribution to the

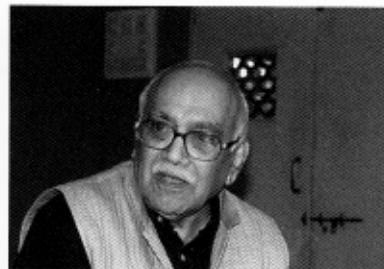


Kanvinde Residence, New Delhi

architecture of our nation not only for the quality of the work itself, but also for the high ethical and professional standards they have brought to the practice of architecture. In a profession which is rapidly becoming more and more venal and cynical, together, they have formed a partnership which has few, if any, parallels in our time.

## **COMMITTED MODERNIST**

Late Anant Raje



I believe that the environment is one of the prime forces to shape a man's character, his attitudes, and his approach to deal with a situation that can be seemingly complex, rich with substantive undercurrent of any part of immediate or past historical content. In particular when such a person has a historical lineage coming from the south-western part of Konkan in Maharashtra which is a well known spawning ground for writers, poets, historians, painters and above all, the ones who have kept the tradition of music alive. Mr. A.P. Kanvinde is one such person who helped shape the architecture of Independent India as a "Committed Modernist" when the Neoclassical academicism had its full sway in a few metropolitan cities. The first impact of the classical Harvardian modernist approach brought on the post-independence stage in his buildings in Ahmedabad, namely - the laboratories and offices for the Ahmedabad Textile Research Centre called ATIRA sponsored by the Ahmedabad Textile Industry. This was the landmark building which became a complete and

mature statement of the Rationalist within the Harvard University's academic tradition, classifying the nature of forms, identifying the function and expressing them in terms of their compositional relationship creating significant external spaces and above all, the recognition to the prevailing industrial technology of the time. Obviously the message was, along with other modernist architects, that "Architecture" is truly the product of a well organized technology devoid of any frills or handicraft, mass conceived and mass produced, releasing the overburdening stiffness of plan and spaces that would truly embark on solutions to many complex problems posed by the new socio-economic dimensions in any emerging democracy.

Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad



## आधुनिक, देखण्या वास्तु-प्रकल्पांचे निर्माते अच्युतराव कानविंदे

Arun Ogale



स्वातंत्रप्राप्तीनंतरच्या चंदिगड येथील अविष्कारित वास्तुकलेमुळे भारतात आधुनिक वास्तुकलेचे पर्व सुरु झाले. याच सुमारास या नव्या शास्त्राच पाश्चात्य देशातील शिक्षण संपवून काही तरुण मंडळी भारतात परतली होती. त्यांनी आपले उच्च शिक्षण येथे नवनव्या योजनांत राबविण्यास सुरुवात केली. अशा परिस्थितीत ज्या थोडया वास्तुतज्ज्ञांनी भारतात आधुनिक वास्तुकलची बीज पेरली व तिचा प्रकर्षणे अविष्कार करण्यात पुढाकार घेतला त्यात दिल्लीचे मराठी वास्तुतज्ज्ञ श्री. अच्युत कानविंदे यांचे नाव विशेषत्वाने घेतले जाते.

श्री. कानविंदे यांचे वय आज 57 वर्षांचे आहे. दिल्लीत त्यांची एक सुस्थापित फर्म आहे. भारतातील मोठ-मोठी कामं त्यांच्या नावावर आहेत.

अमेरिकन छाप  
विचार घडण्याच्या वयात ते अमेरिकेतील हावड विद्यापीठात



District Headquarters, Sindhudurg

होते. त्यामुळे प्रारंभीच्या त्यांच्या कामांवर अमेरिकन वास्तुकलेची छाप बरीच आहे. पण नंतरच्या काळात मात्र त्यांनी भारतीय परिस्थिती ध्यानी घेऊन योग्य अशा वास्तू निर्माण केल्या. उत्तरत्या छपरांनी पावसाच्या पाण्याला सहज वाट करून देणारी केरळमधील घरे बांबू व लाकडानं बनविलेली भूकंपापासून सुरक्षित राहाणारी आसाममधील घरे, राजस्थानी वाळवटांतील वातावरणात चपखल बसणारी दगडी घरे, काश्मीर -कुलू मनाली या निसर्गरम्य प्रदेशातील वातावरणाला उठाव आणणारी विशिष्ट घरे व पंजाबमधील गरम वातावरणाला दूर ठेवणारी मातीची घरे अशा अनेक भारतीय प्रदेशातील मूळ वास्तुकलेचा व तेथील लोकांच्या जीवनाचा व निसर्गाचा सूक्ष्म अभ्यास यामुळे भारतीय जीवनाशी इमान राखणारी वास्तुकला निर्मिती करण्याची प्रेरणा त्यांना मिळाली.

#### विचारांचे प्रतिबिंब

वास्तुकलेबाबत श्री. कानविंदे यांचे तत्वज्ञान स्पष्ट आहे. त्याची मते: ज्या कारणासाठी वास्तू बांधवायची त्या कारणाचा विचार, त्याची मीमांसा व पृथक्करण करणं व त्यांचा एक जिनसीणा समजावून घेणे याला विशेष महत्व आहे व हे महत्वाचे पथ्य पाळून निर्मिलेल्या वास्तुच्या वातावरणात जर वास्तुविषयक कारणे- दृष्टीकोन स्पष्ट होत असेल तर त्यात सौंदर्य आपोआप निर्माण होते. वास्तुनिर्मिती म्हणजे चार भिंती बांधणं नव्हे तर वास्तुबाबत विचार करताना निसर्ग, हवा, पाणी उजेड वास्तुतील मानवी जीवनावश्यक इतर तांत्रिक व्यवस्था (सांडपाणी वगैरे) बागबगीचा असा संपूर्ण शास्त्रशुद्ध विचार करून वास्तू घडविली जाते. केवळ मानवी व्यवहार हालचाली यांचीच काळजी घेऊन चालत नाही तर मानवाठायीच्या भावना, आपुलकी (इंटीमसी) यांचाही खोलवर विचार करून निरनिराळी योग्य अवकाश (स्पेसेस) निर्माण करावी लागतात. वास्तुरचना, वास्तुसाहित्य यांची कौशल्यपूर्ण योजना करून या विचारांचं प्रतिबिंब वास्तूत स्थिर करणे म्हणजेच मानवी जीवनोपयोगी निसर्गाशी इमान राखणारी आकर्षक वास्तू घडविणे होय.

### गृहिणीची सोय

या आपल्या तत्वज्ञानावर आधारीत अनेक इमारत प्रकल्पाची योजना श्री. कानविंदे यांनी केली आहे. पंतनगर (उ.प्र.), राहुरी (अहमदनगर), बंगलोर येथील कृषी विद्यापीठ, मुंम्बई विद्यापीठ प्रकल्प योजना, आय.आय.टी कानपूर, इंडीयन स्टॅटीस्टिकल इन्स्टिट्यूट दिल्ली असे शैक्षणिक इमारत प्रकल्प, आणंद येथील तसेच मुंम्बई मध्ये कुर्ला येथील दुध डेअरी प्रकल्प, अहमदाबाद येथील मृणालिनी साराभाई यांची नृत्य शाळा, श्रीनगर येथील हायकोर्ट व अनेक प्रयोगशाळा व औद्योगिक प्रकल्प - अशा अनेकविध कारणासाठी इमारत योजना करण्यात श्री. कानविंदे यशस्वी झाले आहेत.

Bharat Soka Gakkai, Manesar



दिल्ली येथील महाराणी विभागात श्री. कानविंदे यांनी स्वतःची आकार नावाची एक अप्रतिम वास्तू उभारली आहे. घरात गृहिणी ही सर्वात अधिक काळ असते. तिला स्वयंपाकघरातील कामापासून ते मुलांचा अभ्यास करू घेणे, भाजीवाला, रोटीवाला यांचेकडून गोष्टी विकत घेणे, आल्यागेल्यांची चौकशी करणे अशी अनेक कामे करावी लागतात. तेव्हा तिला कमीत कमी पायपीट करावी लागावी यासाठी स्वयंपाक घर, दिवाण खाना, मुलांच्या व कुंदुंब प्रमुखांच्या झोपावयाच्या खोल्यांच्या सर्वांची योजना वेगवेगळ्या सोईच्या पातळीवर त्यांनी केली आहे. यामुळे घराच घरपण सांभाळीत गृहिणी सर्व व्यवहार करुशकते. घरातील गृहिणीला सोईस्कर अशी योग्य योजना हा या वास्तू योजनेचा गाभा आहे. वास्तूत हवा व उजेड यांची परिणामकारक योजना केली असून सर्व वास्तू साहित्याचा कौशल्यपूर्ण वापर करू मूळ वास्तू कारण विषयक दृष्टीकोनानंतून एक आकर्षक व औचित्य पूर्ण वास्तू कानविंदे यांनी घडविली आहे. इंडियन इन्स्टिट्यूट ऑफ टेक्नॉलॉजी - कानपूर येथील प्रकल्प योजना करताना लायड्री इमारत, लेक्वर हॉल, अशा अनेक इमारतींच योग्य जाले त्यांनी विणले असून इमारती-इमारतीमध्ये रहदारी साठी एक विशिष्ट पथ योजना (कॉरिडॉर्स) केली आहे व इमारतींच्या वेगवेगळ्या मजल्यावर त्या त्या पातळीवर हे पथ सांधल्याने सर्व व्यवहार त्या त्या पातळीवर खाली न उतरता न चढता केले जातात. ही सर्व इमारत योजना अत्यंत शिस्तबद्ध असून ठिकिठिकाणी बागबगीचा, पाण्याचे छोटे तलाव यांमुळे आकर्षक व निसर्गरम्य अशी झाली आहे. मानवी व्यवहार व भावनिक गरजा यांना सोईची झाली आहे.

#### आधुनिक गौळीवाडे

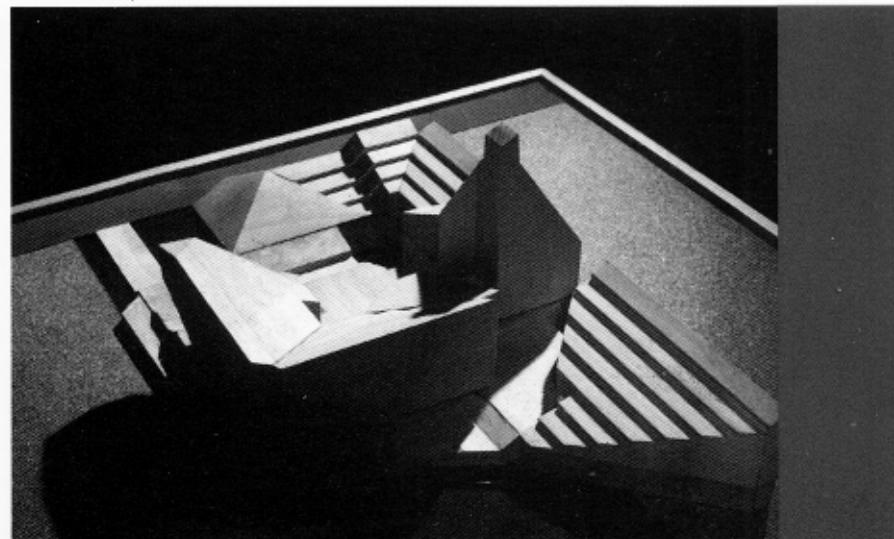
भारतीय दुध निर्माण व वितरक संस्थांसाठी गौळीवाडे त्यांतील कामकाज त्यांची भविष्य काळातील प्रगती याबाबत प्रमाणी- करणाची विशिष्ट योजना श्री. कानविंदे यांनी केली व त्यानुसार त्यांच्या इमारतींची योजना करण्याचे नवे पायंडे पाडले. शाळांच्या इमारतींबाबत कमी वजनाची छपर योजना, गुजरात हौसिंग बोर्डसाठी कमी उत्पन्न असलेल्या लोकांसाठी - कमी किंमतीत घर बांधावयाची योजना अशा योजना कानविंदे यांनी शोधून काढल्या, दिल्लीजवळ गाझीयाबाद येथे दिल्ली क्लॉथ मिल्ससाठी 160 फूट रुदीच्या बो स्ट्रीग गर्डर्स ची योजना करू एक प्रचंड कारखाना त्यांनी अवघ्या एका वर्षात बांधून पूर्ण केला - अशी अनेक नविन विचारांच्या शोध घेत भारतीय वास्तुकलेत त्यांनी महत्वपूर्ण भर टाकली आहे.

### संत वास्तुतज्ज्ञ

अमेरिकेतील प्रसिद्ध वास्तुतज्ज्ञ जोम्स मिलर यांच्या सहकार्याने श्री. कानविंदे यांनी भारतातील विद्यापीठ इमारत प्रकल्प नावाच एक माहितीपूर्ण व मार्मिक पुस्तक लिहले असून याशिवाय वास्तुकला संबंधित विषयावर विद्वत्ताप्रचुर लिखाण त्यांनी केले आहे. भारतातील व परदेशातील अनेक विद्यापीठांत ते हिंजीटींग प्रोफेसर म्हणून वेळोवेळी काम करतात.

श्री. व सौ. कानविंदे मुलगी सुनिता व मुलगा संजय असा छोटा संसार आहे. घरात वातावरण मराठीच. शिवाय पुजाअर्चा असे संस्कार आहेत. आज वयाच्या 57 वर्षी सुध्दा उत्साहाने अविरत काम करीत असतात. आपल्या अभ्यासू वृत्तीमुळे व मौलिक कार्यामुळे ते वास्तुकला क्षेत्रातील एक आंतराराष्ट्रीय कीर्तीचे वास्तुतज्ज्ञ समजले जातात. आपल्या शांत विनयशील प्रांजल रवभावामुळे त्यांनी संत वास्तुतज्ज्ञ असाहा लौकीक मिळविला आहे.

Indian Pavillion, Osaka



## **DESIGN NEEDS A CENTRAL IDEA**

Ram Paradkar



"Design always requires a central idea." That was what Shri Kanvinde said, when we met at his house in Diwali '94 for the first time while I was thinking to write a book on him in Marathi. Since then, we met several times, both, at Delhi and at Pune. Most of our dialogue is taped on audio cassette and I still possess it. It's a valuable treasure now.

He further continued saying "This central idea carries a lot of weight in architectural design. It gives meaning to the design. Such an idea can click in three/four ways. It can emerge from humanistic approach, or through technology or may be through a philosophical approach. Sometimes it can emerge even from the available site conditions or from climatic considerations".

"Only conceiving a 'Central Idea,' also is not enough, but a designer should be capable enough to transform it into a meaningful built form. That is the toughest job.

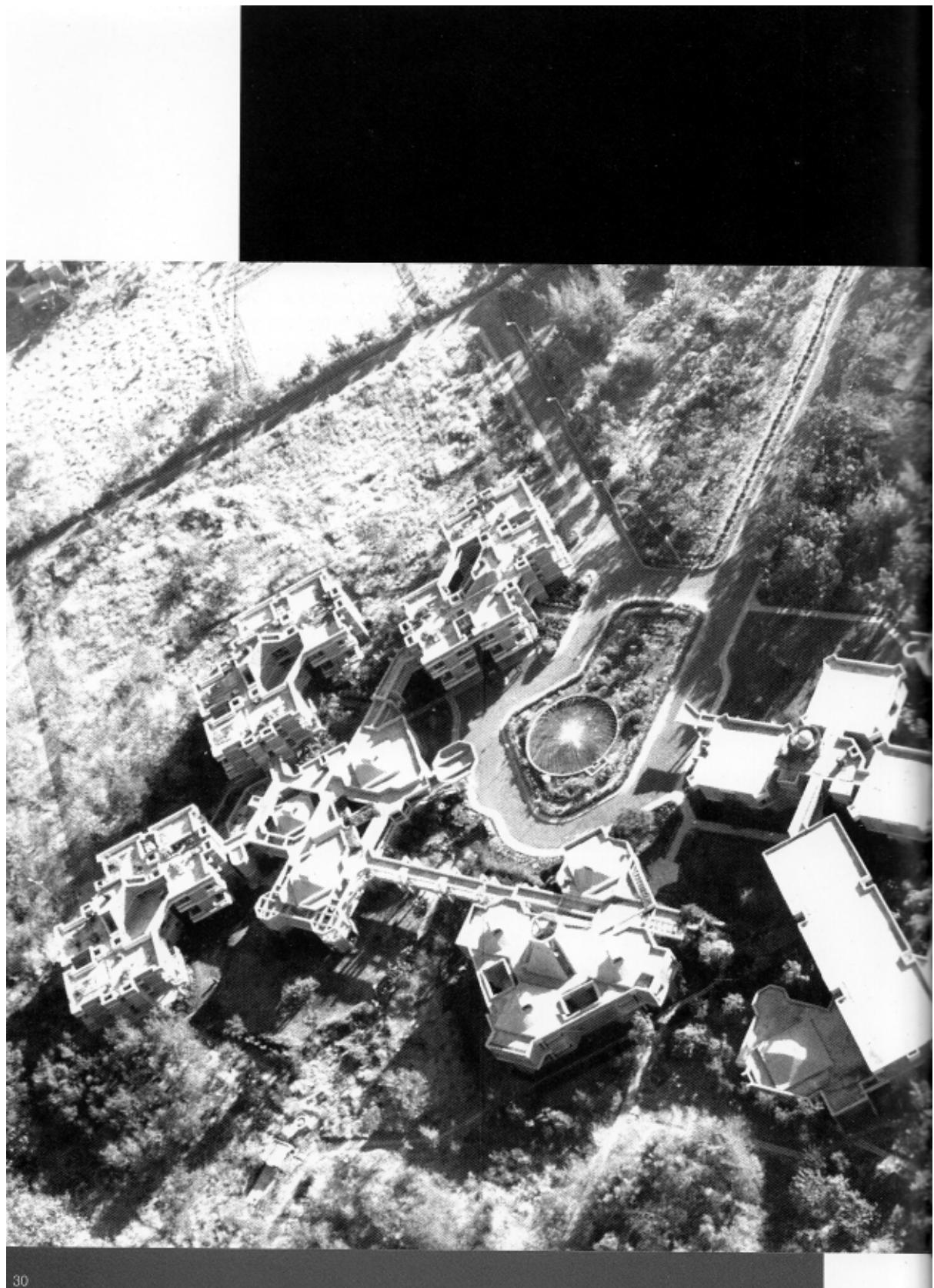
If one can do it effortlessly, he can safely be called a good architect". He further elaborated this idea, stating some of his own examples.

"How should you be remembered"? I once asked.  
"My buildings are my best memory. No other memory is required"  
answered this soft spoken and humble man. His voice had a satwik (spiritual) quality, and to hear him speak was always a treat. I can still hear him on the cassettes, which I do sometimes.

His buildings are going to inspire us, and stay for a long long time to come, and so is his memory.

Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai







Aerial view, National Insurance Academy (NIA), Pune

## SELECTED PROJECTS

**Balkrishna Harivallabhdas House, Ahmedabad**

**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur**

**Dudhsagar Dairy Complex, Mehsana**

**National Dairy Development Board Office, New Delhi**

**National Science Centre, New Delhi**

**National Institute of Bank Management, Pune**

**ISKCON Parthasarathy Temple, New Delhi**

**Unbuilt Works**

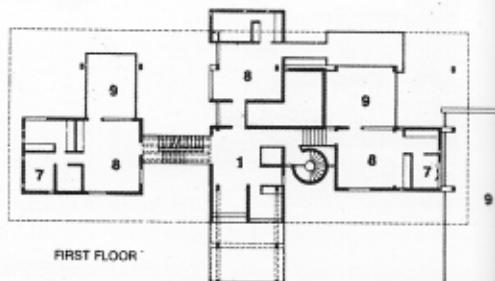
Post Kanvinde Projects

**IIT Kanpur Extension**

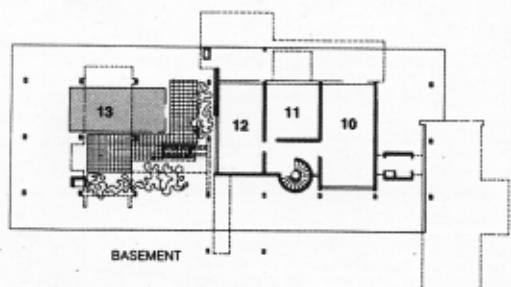
**Dudhsagar Dairy, Mehsana**

#### FLOOR PLANS

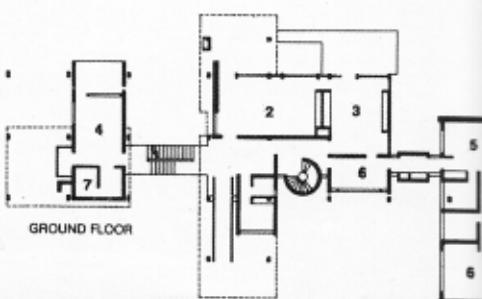
1 ENTRANCE HALL	8 BEDROOM
2 LIVING ROOM	9 TERRACE
3 DINING ROOM	10 UTILITY
4 GUEST ROOM	11 A/C PLANT ROOM
5 KITCHEN	12 PLAYROOMS
6 PANTRY/ STORE	13 POOL
7 TOILET/ DRESSING	



FIRST FLOOR

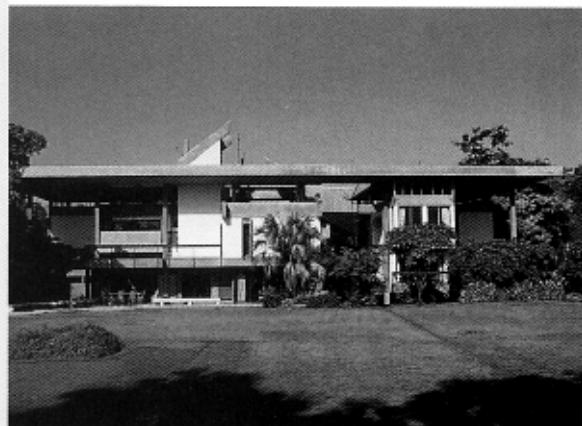


BASEMENT



GROUND FLOOR





## **Balkrishna Harivallabhdas House, Ahmedabad**

Client: Balkrishna Harivallabhdas

Year of Completion: 1964

Area: 600 sqm

This house is amongst the early examples of modern dwelling designs in India following in the footsteps of Le Corbusier's Shodhan House, but demonstrating its own understanding of its context. It is an ensemble of boxes slotted in a frame of concrete columns and beams and containing rooms with terraces above. A single but punctured roof hovers above this assembly. The plan clearly separates the served and servant areas and puts the core family areas in the centre of the house.

The configuration of the masses responds well to Ahmedabad's hot and dry climate providing shaded outdoor spaces and is oriented to the windward side. The pool brings in the much needed humidity.

The grey elements of exposed concrete break the white walls to give the structure a domestic scale. The house sits in the centre of a large plot of around two and a half acres.



Faculty Block and Library, IIT, Kanpur

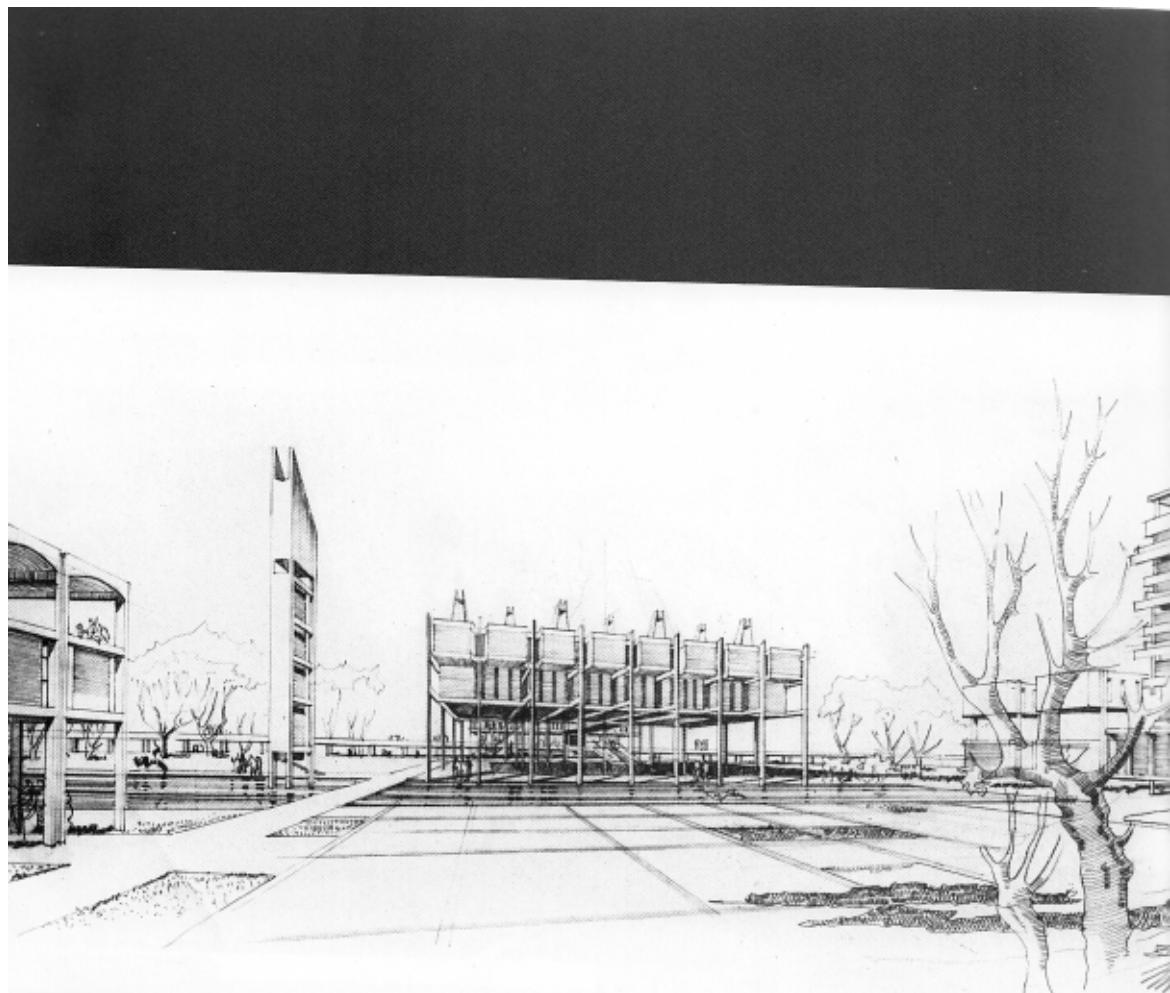


Library, IIT, Kanpur

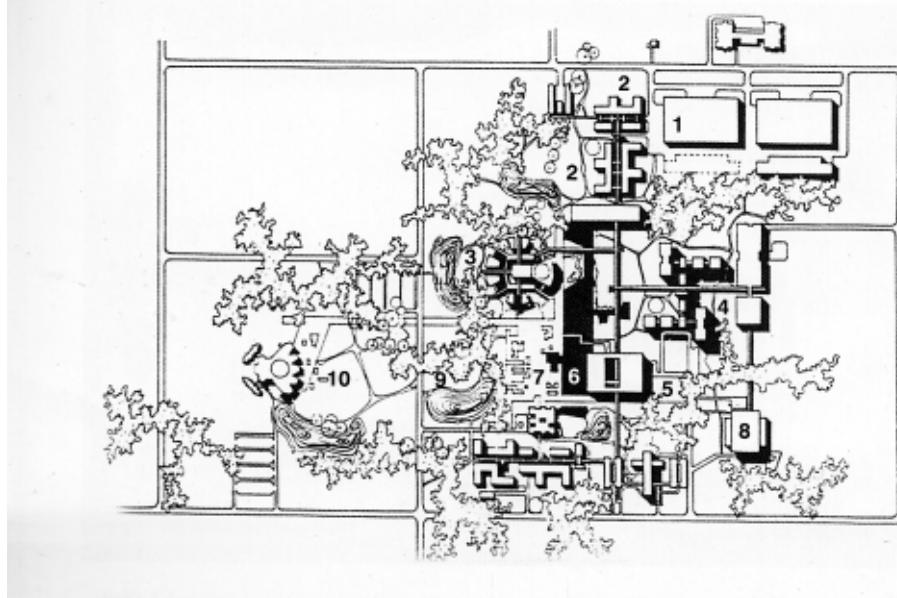
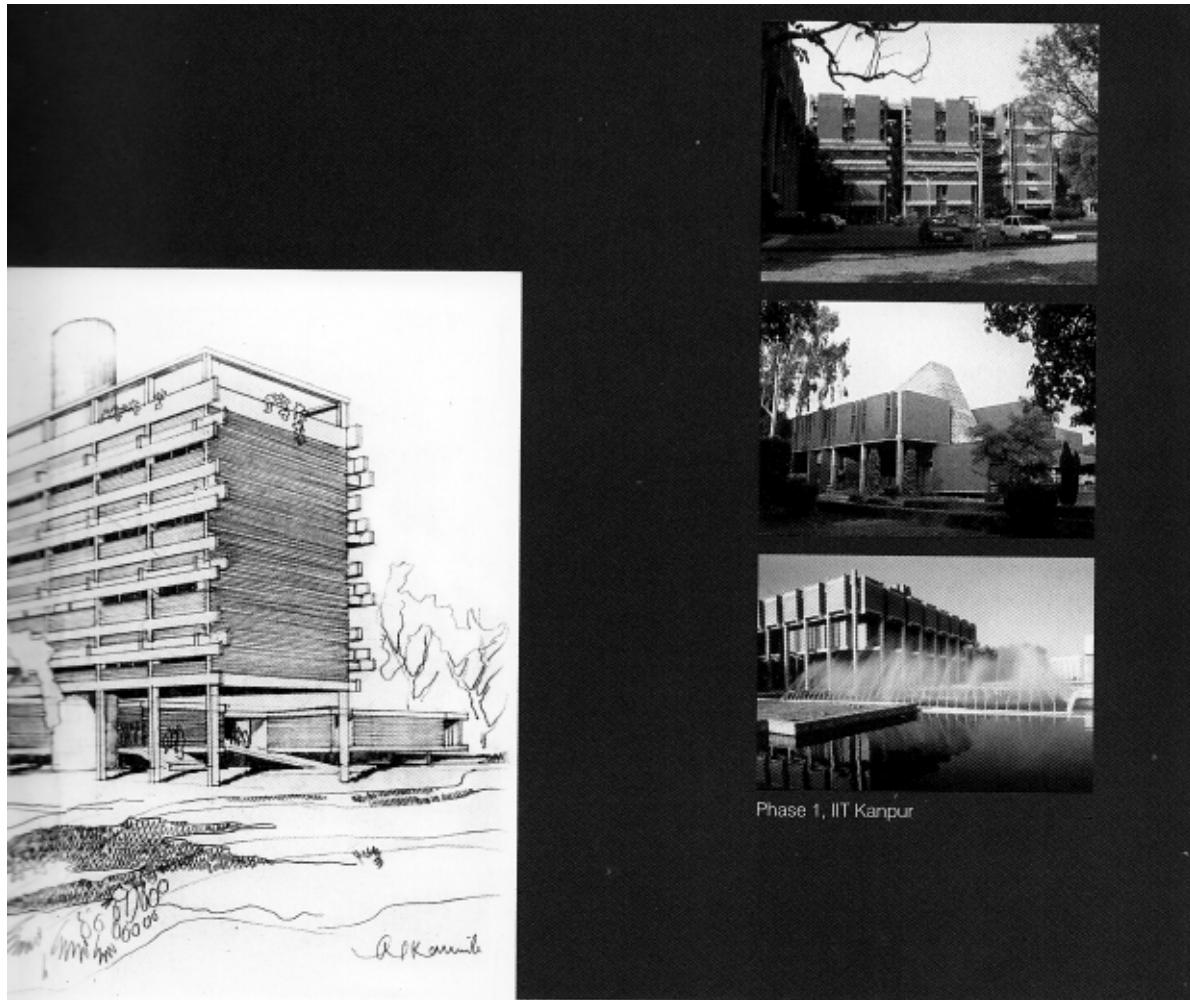
## Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

**Client:** IIT  
**Year of Completion:** 1966  
**Area:** 41821 sqm

One of India's premier institutional campuses and an early example of modern campus design, IIT Kanpur demonstrates aspects of campus planning and architecture dealt by Kanvinde in his book on campus design in India. The campus has grown through the years under the same architect never losing the cohesiveness of its architectural vocabulary. The notable features of the campus are the red brick buildings interspersed by proportionate open plazas and connected by a two- level walkway doubling up as a service duct. The essentially pedestrian campus tries to bring together various departments through its built connections and offers cultural and social spaces along the way. The grounds under its stilted buildings are envisioned as fertile spaces for social, cultural and academic exchanges. The faculty and academic block as well as the library block form the core of all activities. The buildings follow a planning module that also finds expression in the mass of major buildings. Visually light weight concrete columns framing exposed red brick walls forms the material palette of the entire campus imparting it an austere and timeless quality.

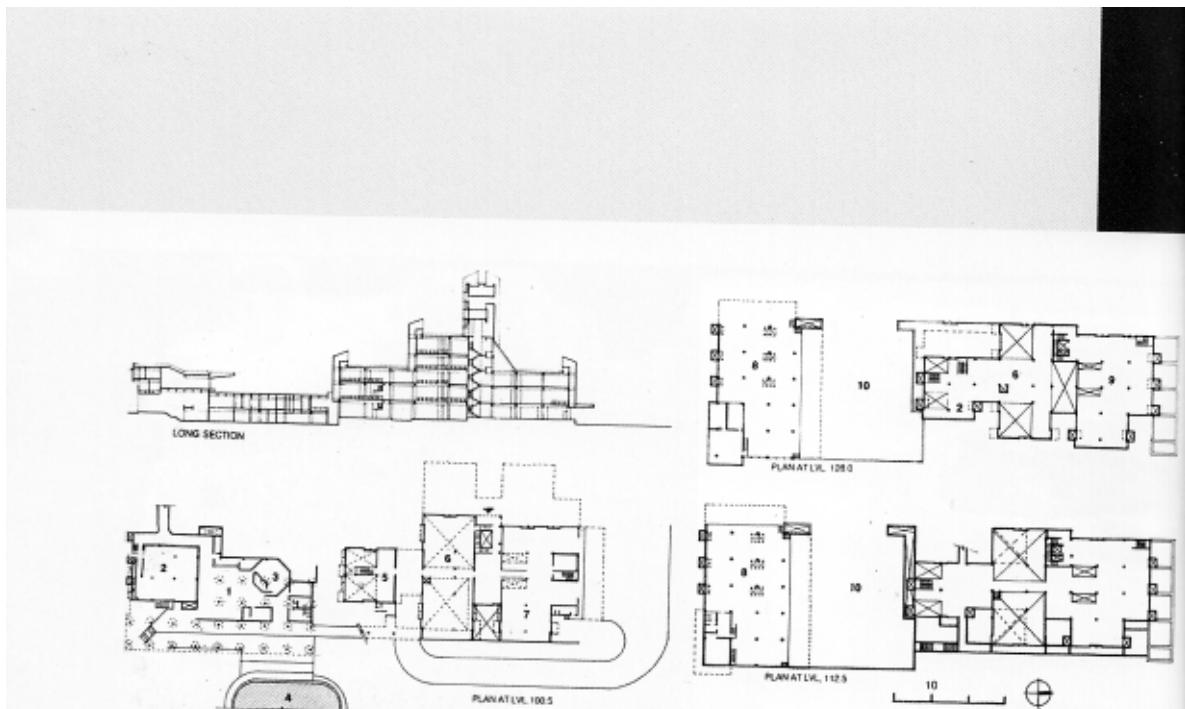


Main Piazza, IIT Kanpur



#### CAMPUS LAYOUT

- 1 WORKSHOPS
- 2 LABORATORIES
- 3 LECTURE HALLS
- 4 FACULTY BUILDING
- 5 LIBRARY POOL
- 6 PLAZA
- 7 COMPUTER CENTRE
- 8 ADMINISTRATION
- 9 AUDITORIUM & CULTURAL CENTRE
- 10

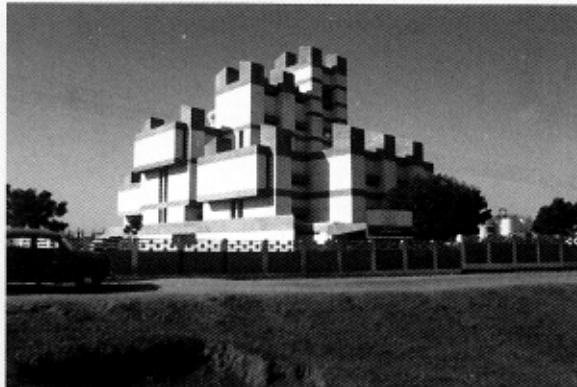


#### FLOOR PLANS AND SECTION

1 VISITOR'S AREA	5 CONDENSING PLANT	9 FILLING AND PACKING
2 MILK TANKS	6 SPRAY DRYING	10 TRUCK DECK
3 AUDITORIUM	7 FINISHED GOODS	11 EMPTY TIN STORE
4 SPRAY POND	8 RECEIVING	

Processing and Dispatch Buildings





## Dudhsagar Dairy Complex, Mehsana

Client: Co-operative Milk Producers' Union

Year of Completion: 1973

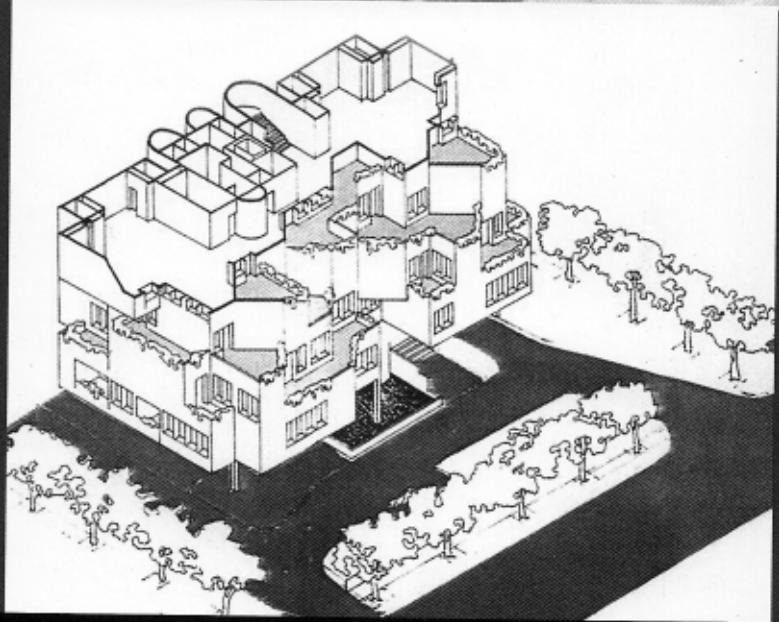
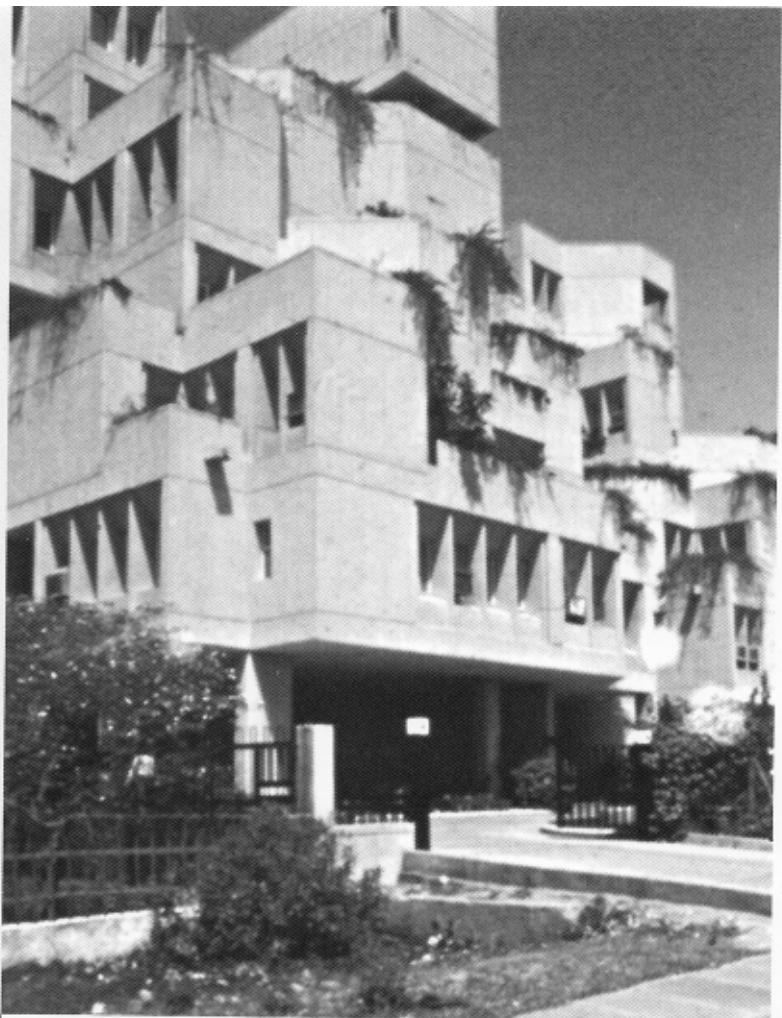
Area: 6000 sqm

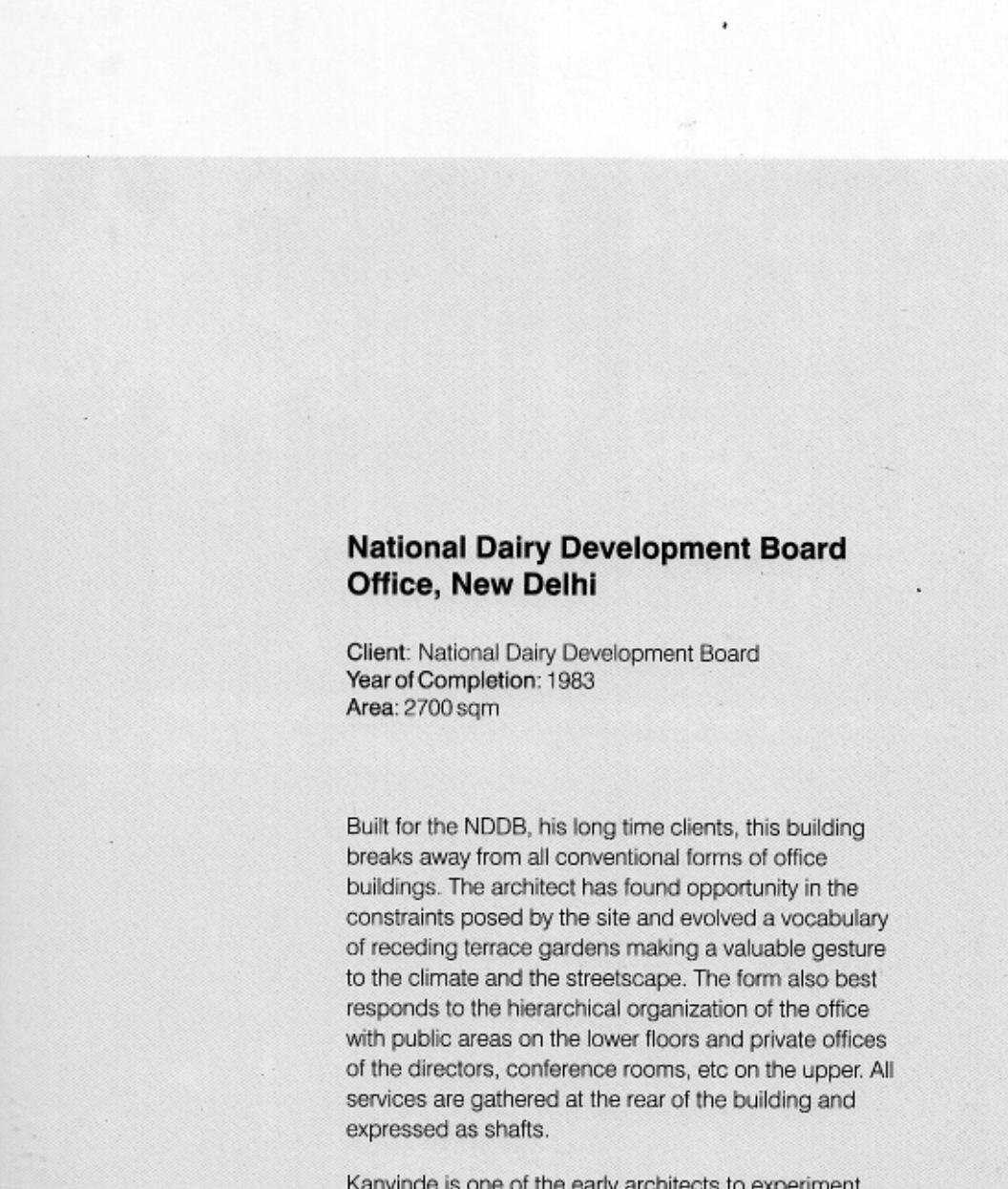
The building is an example of not only integrating functional requirements of an industrial unit with the considerations of good form, but also of using architectural techniques to better industrial processes.

The tall volume required for the spray drying process, the need to dissipate heat and odour generated during production, inefficient mechanical systems and exploiting the available sloping site seem to be the main design determinants.

The ventilation shafts ordering the mass visually bound by the external finish serve as the functional and expressional idiom. The robust yet playful design lends an unusual and unique character to an industrial program.





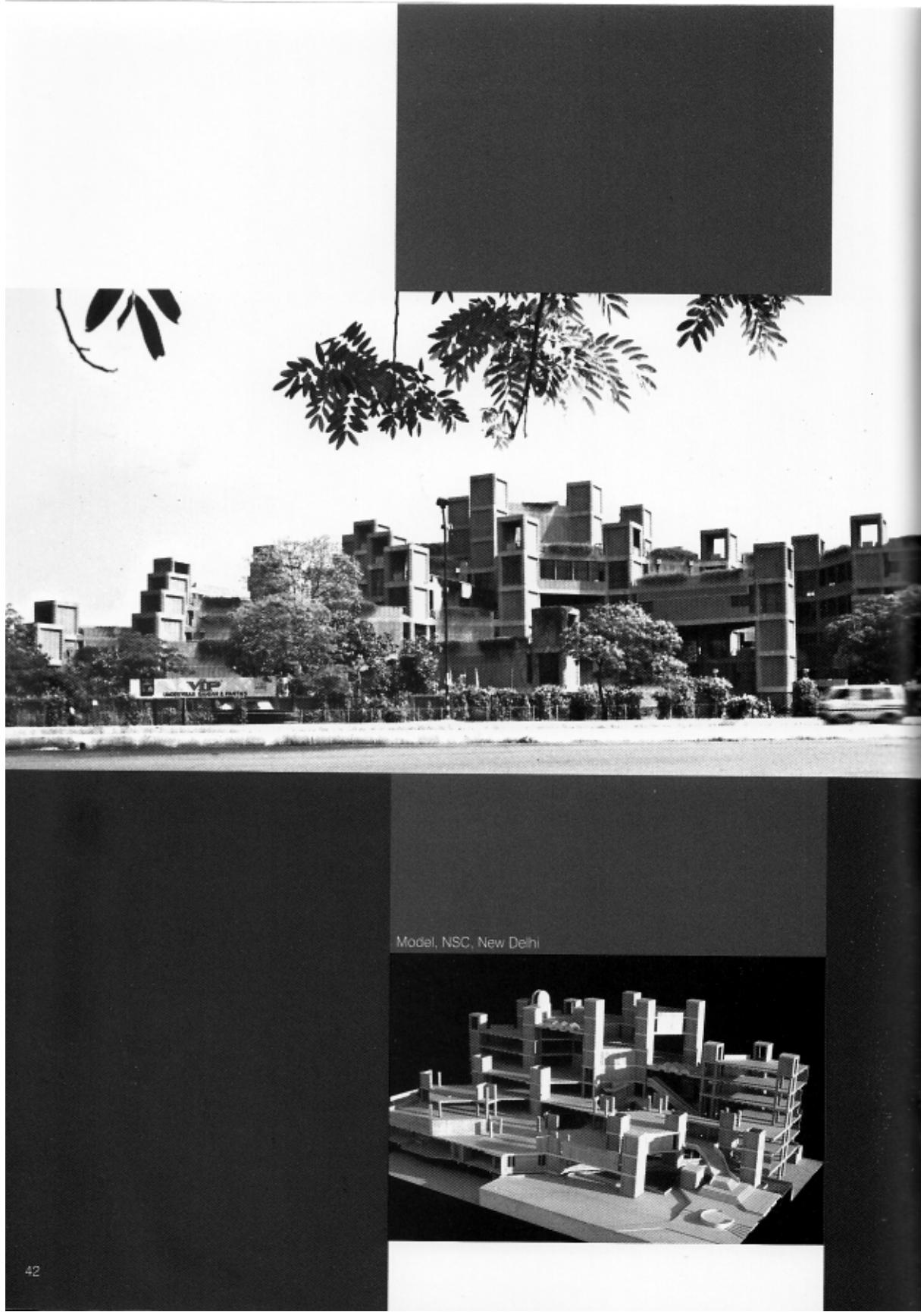


## **National Dairy Development Board Office, New Delhi**

Client: National Dairy Development Board  
Year of Completion: 1983  
Area: 2700 sqm

Built for the NDDB, his long time clients, this building breaks away from all conventional forms of office buildings. The architect has found opportunity in the constraints posed by the site and evolved a vocabulary of receding terrace gardens making a valuable gesture to the climate and the streetscape. The form also best responds to the hierarchical organization of the office with public areas on the lower floors and private offices of the directors, conference rooms, etc on the upper. All services are gathered at the rear of the building and expressed as shafts.

Kanvinde is one of the early architects to experiment with and extensively use grit plaster. This building uses chips of a subtle white marble for its external finish that also complements the light green stone of its interior flooring. The overall appearance is of a restrained and clean building scaled down to a domestic level.

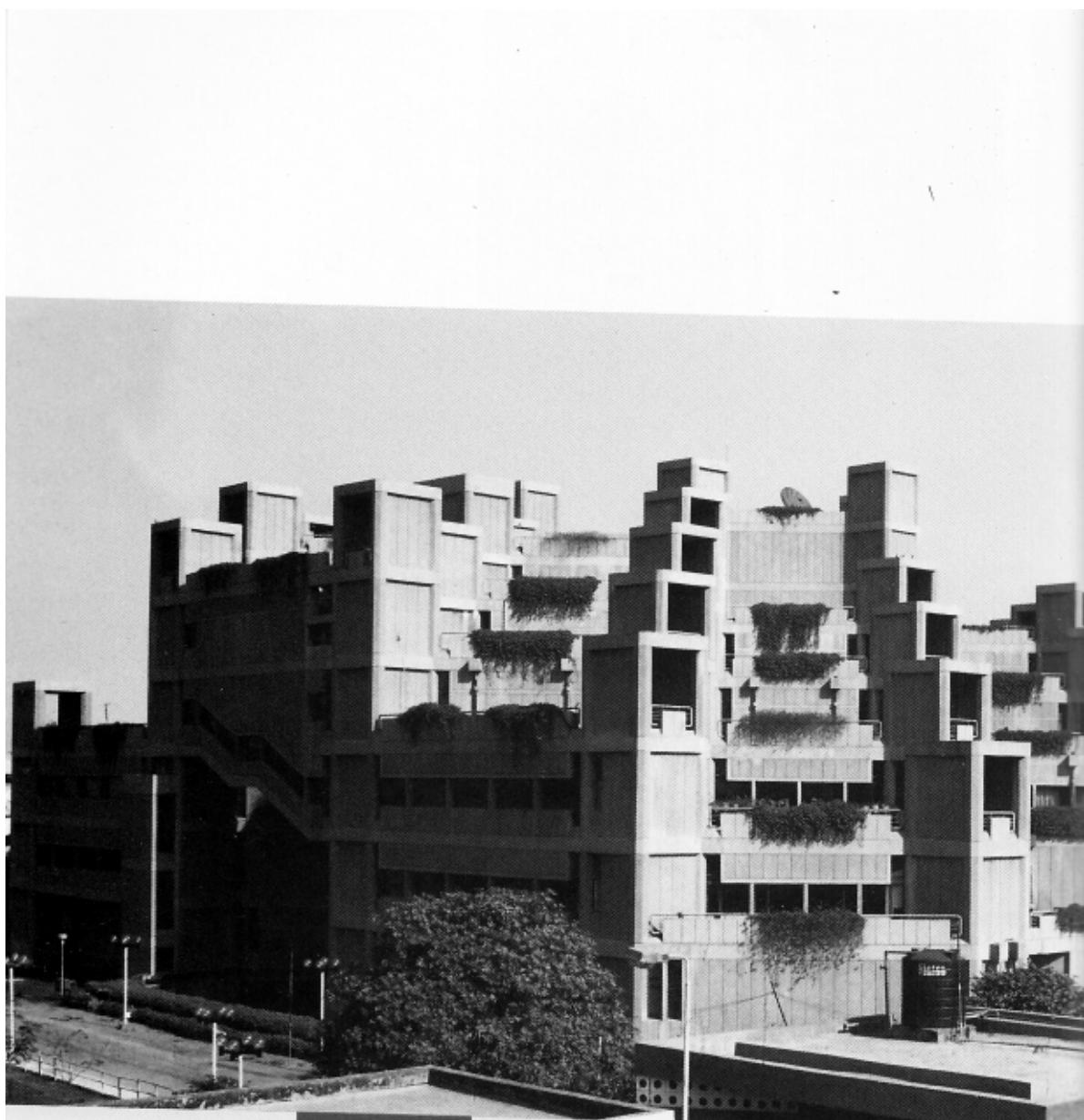




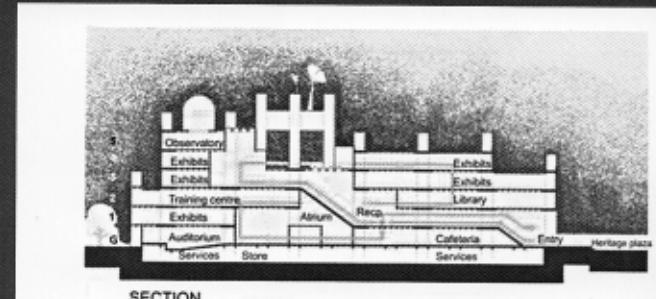
## **National Science Centre, New Delhi**

Client: Council of Scientific and Industrial Research  
Year of Completion: 1990  
Area: 14000 sqm

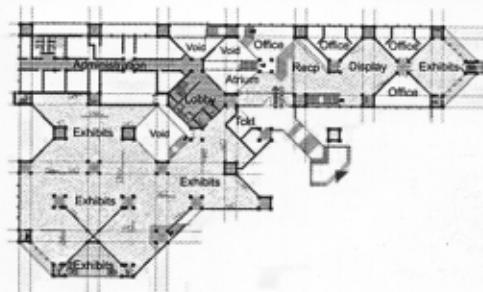
Designed for a varied array of requirements on a tight urban site, this building cleverly uses functional requirements to generate a controlled form. Devices like a higher level entry, a descending sequence of exhibition galleries, an irregular atrium space connecting multiple levels, terraces as relieving spaces on higher floors and creating a public space at the plaza level make the journey through this building a tireless and enjoyable experience. The large mass of the building is divided and scaled down by the ventilation and service shafts of varying heights. The building makes an inviting street gesture by lowering itself towards the road side and extending out an inviting flight of steps from within.



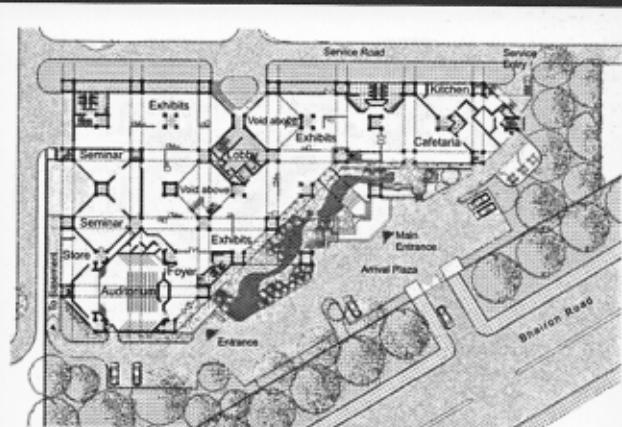
Nehru Science Centre, New Delhi



SECTION



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

#### FLOOR PLANS AND SECTION

- 1 ARRIVAL PLAZA
- 2 EXHIBITS
- 3 SEMINAR
- 4 FOYER
- 5 AUDITORIUM
- 6 CAFETERIA

Administrative Block, NIBM, Pune

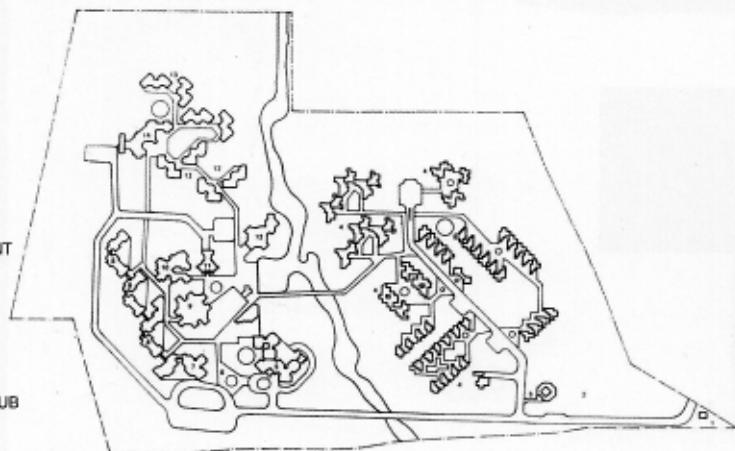


Academic Block, NIBM, Pune



**CAMPUS LAYOUT**

- 1 GATE HOUSE
- 2 WATER TANK
- 3 SHOPPING CENTRE
- 4 RESIDENTIAL UNITS
- 5 EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS
- 6 AUDITORIUM
- 7 ADMINISTRATION
- 8 FACULTY
- 9 LIBRARY
- 10 LECTURE HALL
- 11 CAFETERIA
- 12 MULTIPURPOSE HALL/ CLUB
- 13 HOSTEL
- 14 DINING



Campus Layout, NIBM, Pune

## **National Institute of Bank Management, Pune**

Client: Reserve Bank of India

Year of Completion: 1985

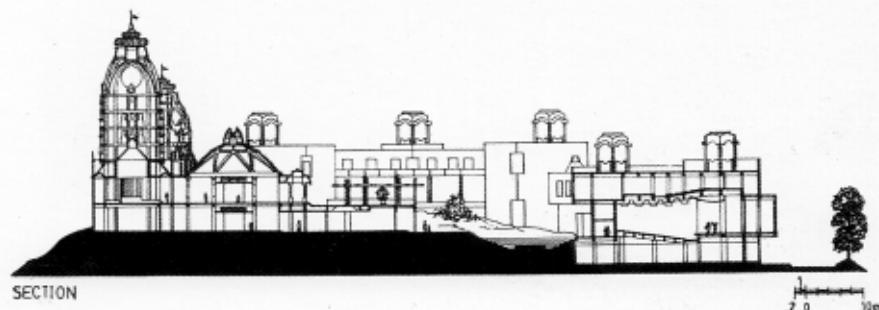
Area: 25000 sqm

This campus in the institutional hub of India is notable for its controlled and intimate scale, refined expression in basalt stone and concrete, and the delightful use of modular geometry to create an apparently organic form. The library building reiterates Kanvinde's mastery over creating complex symmetrical forms from simple geometric configurations.

The campus comprises of an academic zone and a large residential zone separated by a natural stream running through the site. The hostel blocks take advantage of the topography of the site and remain removed from the staff residences as well as the academic buildings.

The doubly loaded corridors of the faculty blocks form a continuous spine holding together all office modules. These offer pleasant glimpses of the landscape outside when they turn between modules and bring in filtered light. Light is also brought inside the library in a controlled but poetic manner.





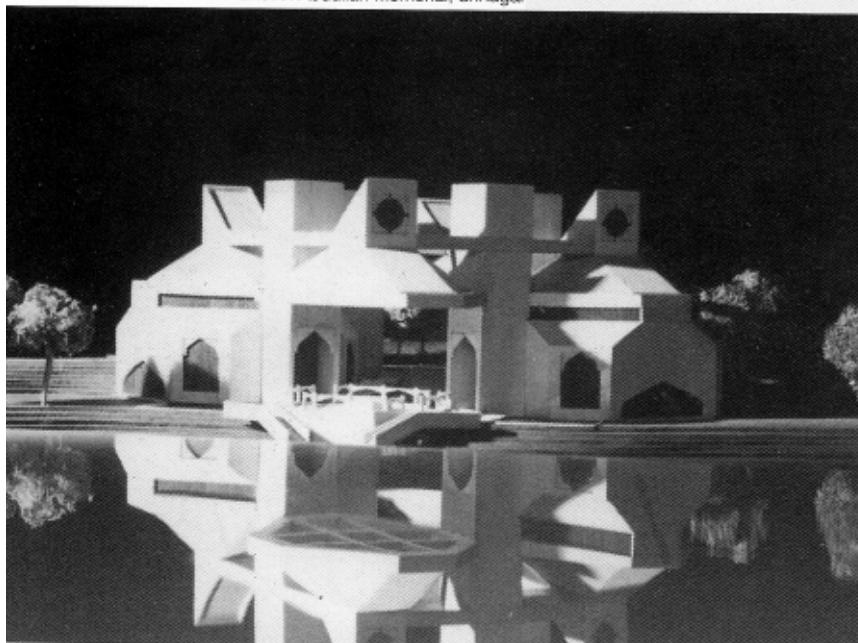
## ISKCON Temple

Client: ISKCON  
Year of Completion: 1998  
Area: not available

The building is a fine example of modern architecture finding expression in a Hindu temple traditionally identified by a fixed set of elements and laden with overt and hidden symbolism. The architect has evolved a vocabulary that is almost post-modern. The journey of a devotee from the site entrance to the temple core is through a series of ascending terraces, evoking the traditional symbolism and at the same time redefining the experience.

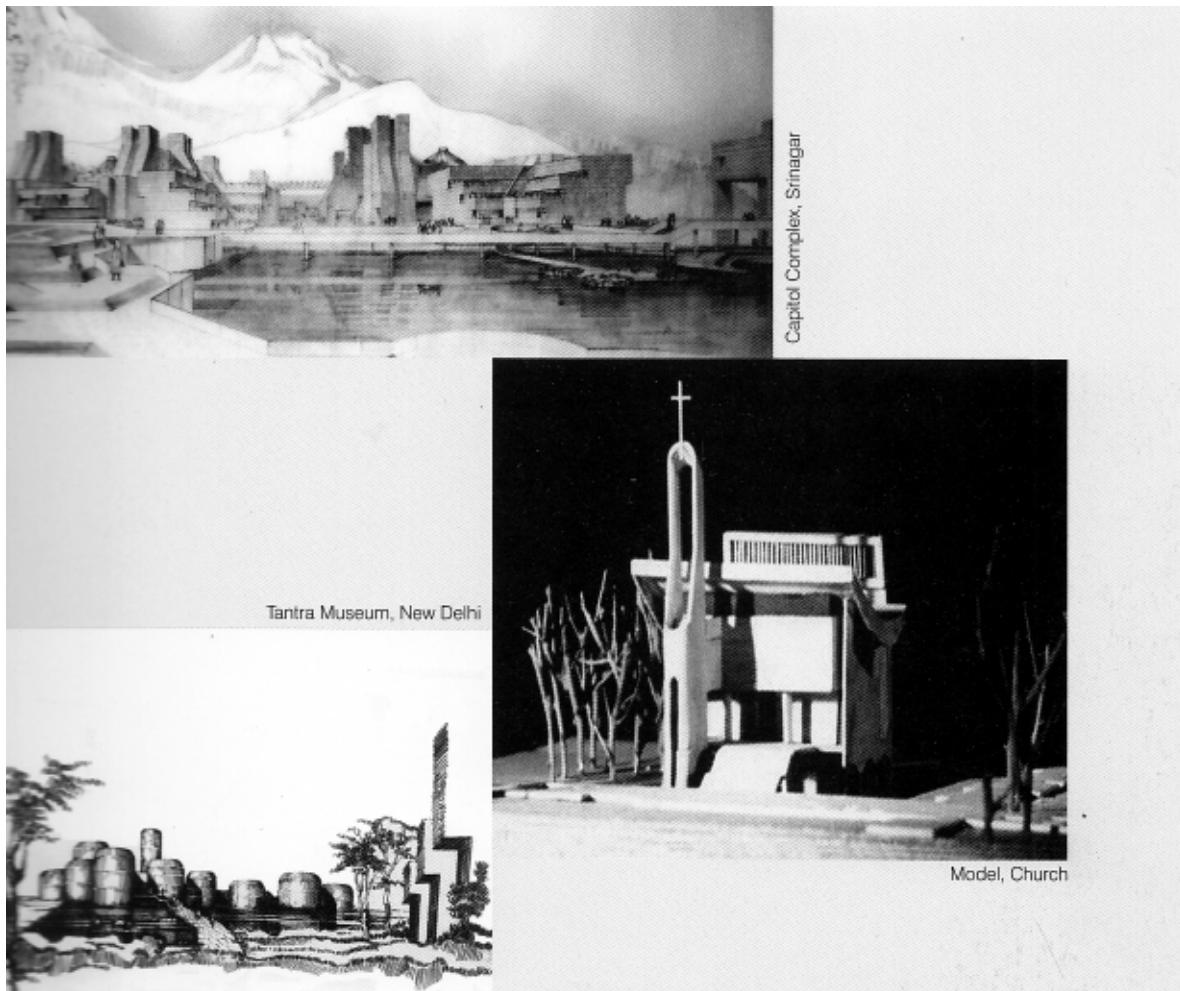
The temple is contained within an enclosure of institutional buildings, evoking the cloistered courts of traditional temples. Kanvinde has unusually enlarged his palette of finishes to lend the campus a festive feel.

Sheikh Abdullah Memorial, Srinagar



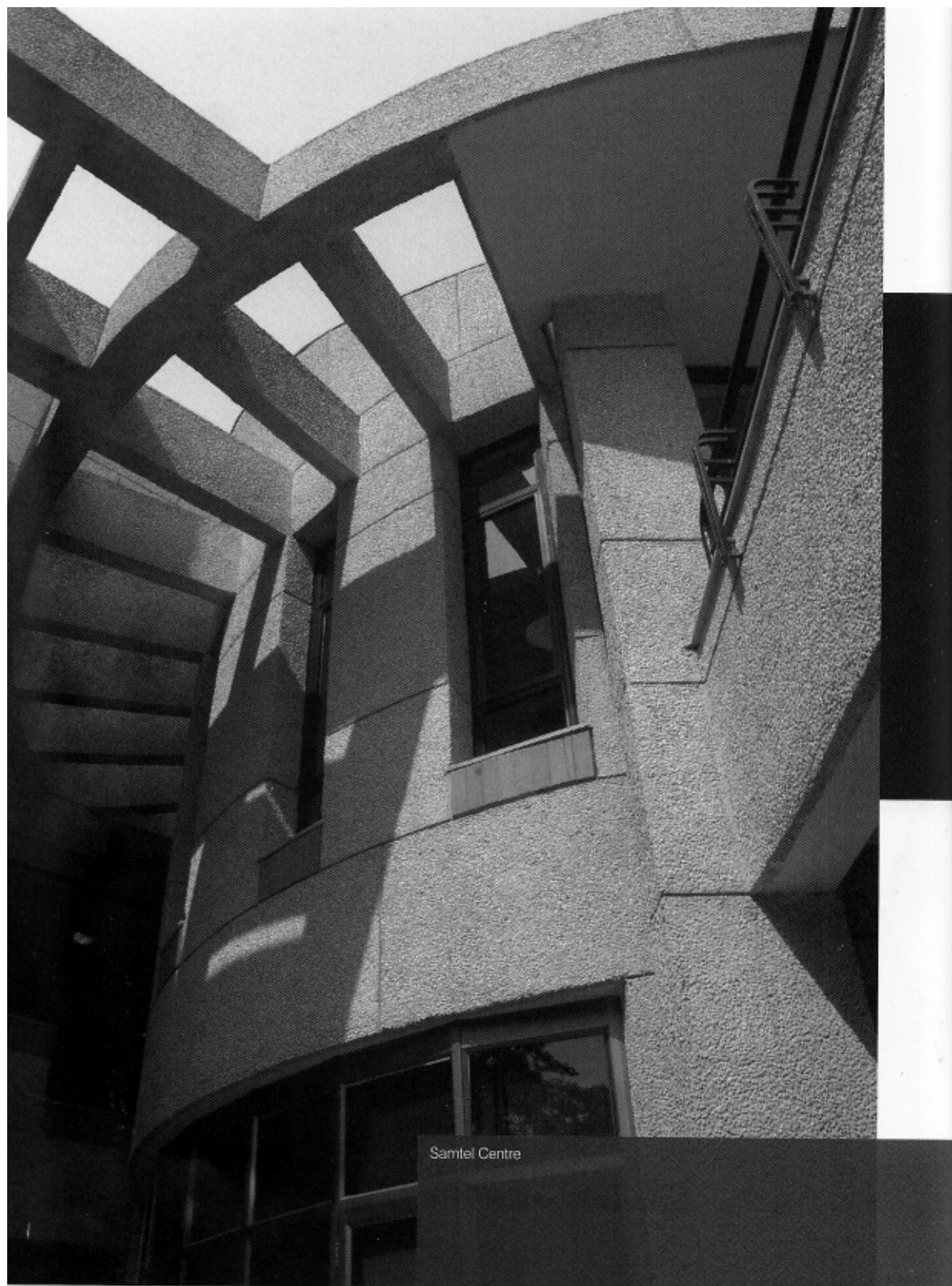
Model of ISKCON Temple, Mayapur





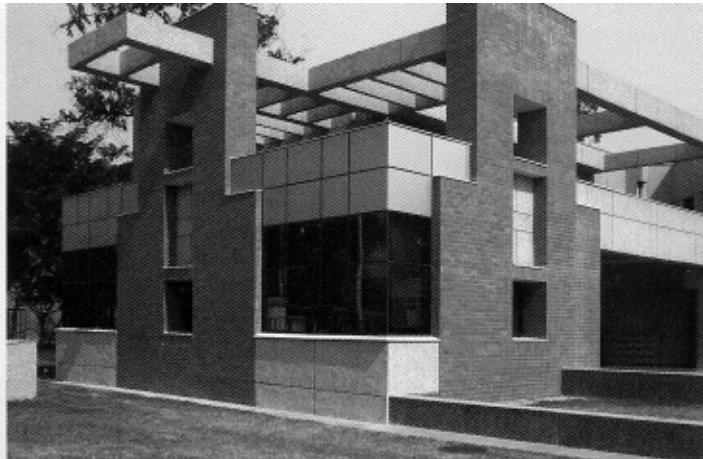
## Unfinished Works

If built projects reveal the efficiency of design and control on detail, unrealized projects bring forth the concepts and ideas that a designer toys with during his/ her design process. Beyond considerations of the nitty-gritty of execution and sometimes even beyond compulsions of many a kind, these ideas through doodles, sketches or study models offer us insights into the creative mind of the designer at his/ her leisure. Sometimes the ideas go through the rigors of refinement and take concrete shape only to be abandoned at the last step of getting built. Such unrealized dreams have no less reason to be published than their built counterparts. Presents here are a few such projects, perhaps getting published for the very first time, but nonetheless, bearing the hallmark of their accomplished creator.





Centre for Environmental Sciences and Engineering



Alumni Centre

## IIT Kanpur, New Development

**Client:** IIT, Kanpur

**Year of Completion:** 2003-2009

**Combined Area:** 14000 sqm

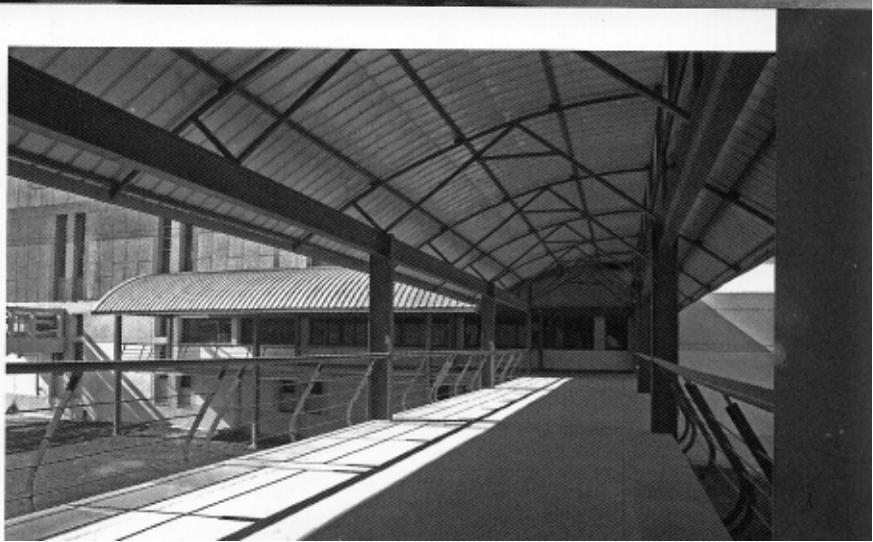


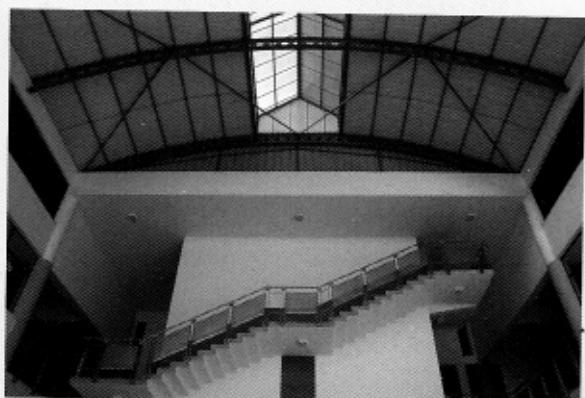
Biological Sciences and Engineering Centre

Kanvinde's office, post Kanvinde's demise, continues to work on new projects, commendably, also working for their old clients. Kanvinde's son Sanjay and daughter-in-law Tanuja have ably continued steering the reputed practice.

Though there is a lot of continuity in the earlier and the new works, there are some major points of departure, perhaps intentional, from Kanvinde's personal style. As exemplified in the new buildings at IIT Kanpur, while brick is still retained as a visual material, it becomes an accent rather than the main body. New materials of the time are introduced forming a different dialect in the overall vocabulary of the campus. The geometries have been more relaxed, allowing for curved forms, surfaces and layouts. The design lays emphasis on generating planes rather than mass modules as dominant elements of the overall composition.

The four buildings presented here are all part of the IIT, Kanpur.





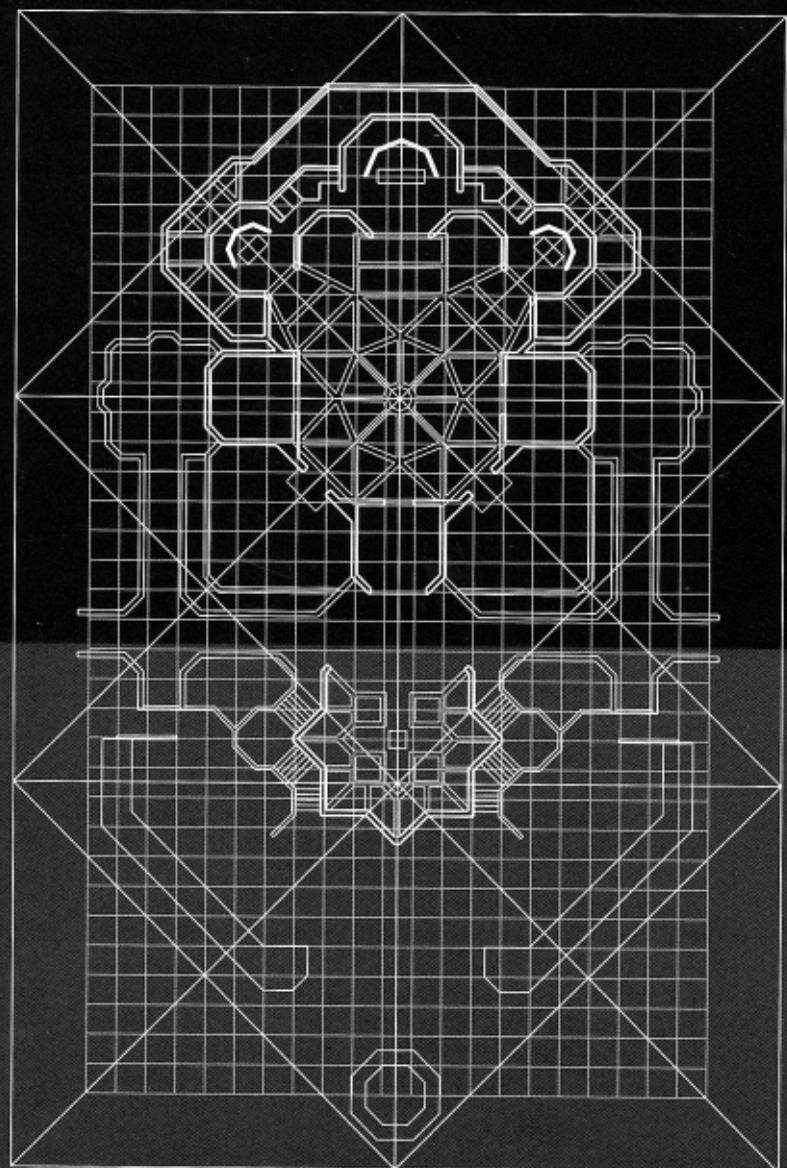
## Dudhmansagar Dairy, Manesar

Client: Mehsana Milk Producers Union

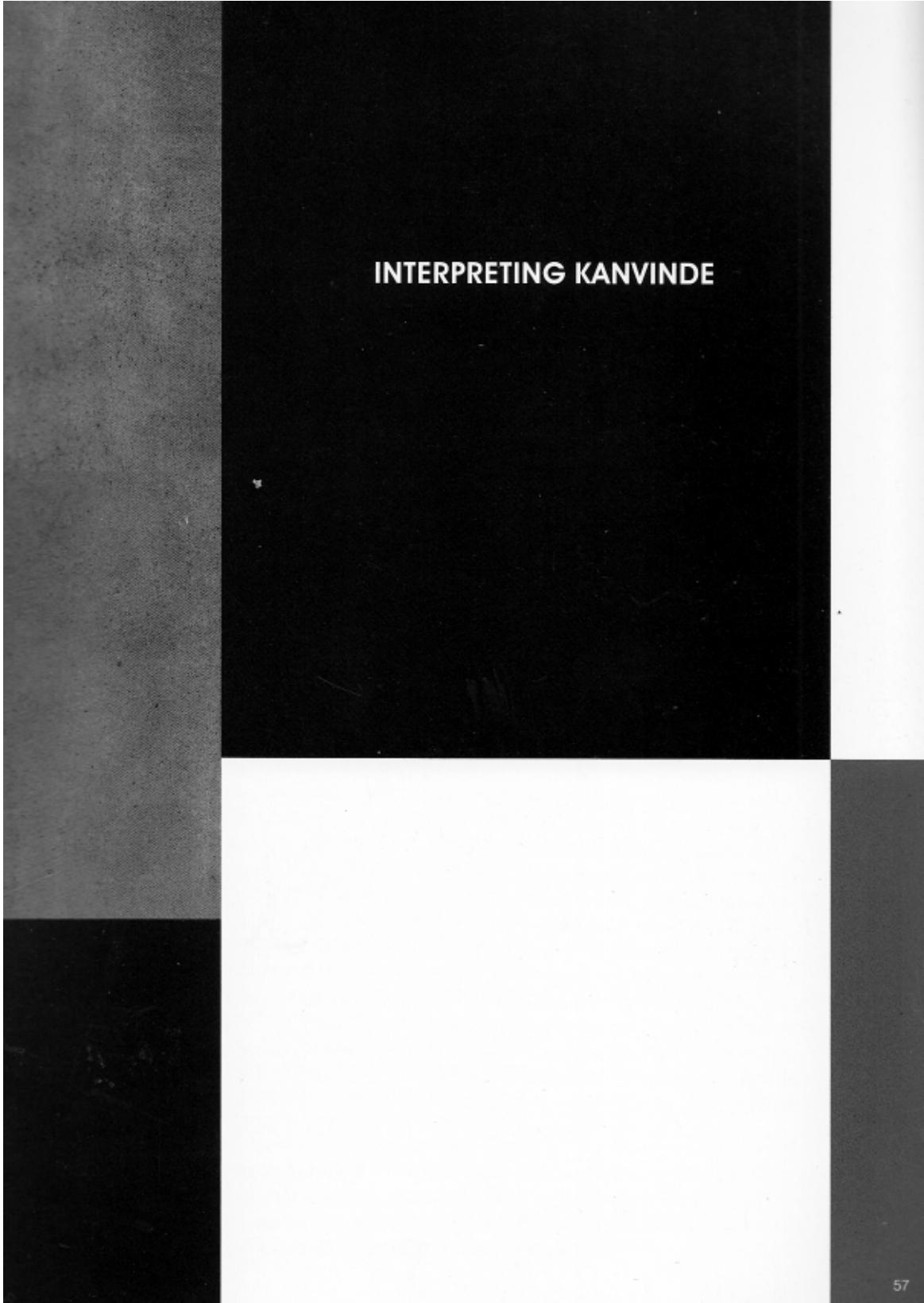
Year of Completion: 2009

Area: 15480 sqm

The Dairy is another of Kanvinde's much worked out building type. The new dairy makes dramatic use of glass in its public area, a material unexplored hereto by the office earlier. Here, the basic functional relationship of the industrial process is respected by using a structural system comprising of flat slabs and folded plates, creating skylights that provide natural light to the process hall.



Grid and Plan, ISKCON temple, New Delhi



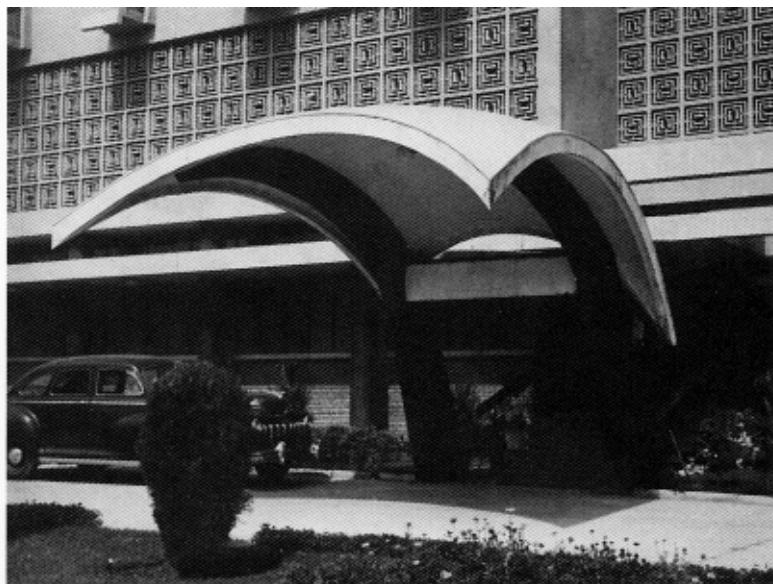
## INTERPRETING KANVINDE

## **THE RELEVANCE OF APK - THE FIRST MODERNIST**

Narendra Dengle



Since Independence, the pace of urban development in this country has altered the face of Indian cities and villages. Of course, the process had begun even before when the Central Public Works Department was formed under the British colonial rule. Government was the biggest agency to realise architectural projects and the beginning of what might be urban design strategies. The CPWD work had a strange stamp of convenience with little contextual relevance whether the projects were in the hills, coastal regions, or the deserts of Rajasthan. On the other hand, cities like Bombay, Delhi, Madras, and Calcutta were being developed by engineers and architects who were in private practice. Today some draconian government policies are threatening to widen the schism between the urban and rural temperaments in the country. Rapid urbanization is made to look like the only solution for development in India. Obsession of competing with the Chinese GNP has led us to overlook agriculture, not only as a resource, but also as a treasure of empirical knowledge



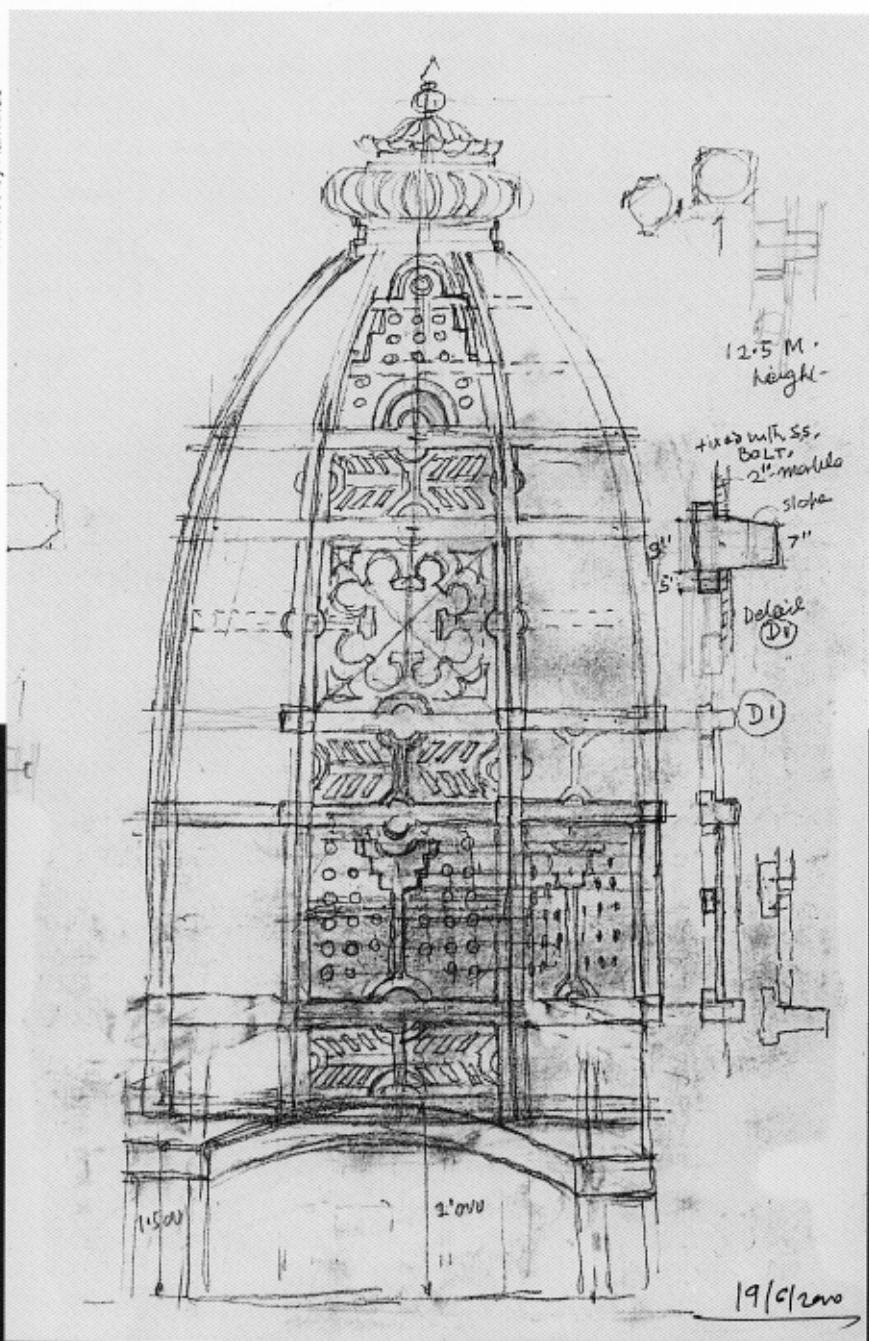
Azad Bhawan, New Delhi

of flora-fauna and traditional communities. In the process, one witnesses a tremendous tension in rural areas which fear a total extinction. Indian modernism, based essentially on the ideas borrowed from the west, even before any 'industrial revolution' really shook this country, had very little to do with its own history, people, and physical context. It pursued 'a sense of newness' based on rationalism resulting from the exposure to another civilization with its own visions of progress and development. The Government thought it necessary to bring the various unconnected provinces and states together, subdivide on the basis of linguistic divisions, usher in the era of industrialisation, push for newer ways of education based on science and technology, create health facilities with modern medicine in view at the cost of the traditional medicinal practices, and create English as the most important language of communication within the country. For India, this together, generally represented the notion of modernism. As far as architecture was concerned, it had swayed between diluted versions of colonial buildings and British experiments in form making based on the inspiration they derived from Europe—especially Italy. This was the backdrop for some of the most sensible of Indian architects, who had begun to struggle to find a different expression for the context. For such architects the problem was not so much to study history— they were very much part of it—leave alone repeating it or its craft, but to discover a new expression that embodied the context and creative aspirations. Modernism had proved to be an intellectually and visually attractive magnetic force. Inevitably traditions took a back seat albeit for the time being. Many others, of course, preferred to run their practices as successful businesses, as it continues today.

The issue before the modernists in India was finding a theme that would bring its populace together. It embraced Nehruvian-socialism, Gandhian austerity and self-reliance without ignoring the Indian village. But as far as the artists and architects were concerned modernism was thought to be

the harbinger of new form. It depended on those individuals like Kanvinde, Baker, Nari Gandhi, Doshi and Correa to give a creative bend to the architecture in the country. Kanvinde must be considered right at the top as the first architect who had the capacity and capability to execute his vision.

Achyut Kanvinde with his humble roots in the villages of Konkan, had ideas of his own. When he returned from his short course at Harvard under Walter Gropius, Kanvinde confessed that he did not understand much that was going on out there- not explicitly- at least. He however had to derive his version of Modernism after returning to India-through his own work and studies from the newsletters he received from Harvard. He was an extraordinarily observant person. He saw technology as a tool and was quick to select newer material to try-out. His stint with the department of science and technology in the government of India must have been useful to clarify issues connected to science and technology. Interacting with peers even beyond ones discipline is most useful to break new ground. He easily made friends with scientists, industrialists and administrators of eminence. Of course there are those who believe that breaking new grounds is a crime and repeating the tradition and engagement with the same craft is the only 'evolutionary' way of architecture. But that was not how Kanvinde's mind worked. The first significance therefore is how and what one learns from ones works and clients and what quality of interaction holds the architect and the client together. In a way Michelangelo's interaction with Pope Julius II is exemplary in arriving at the ideas and visions for the painting of the ceiling of Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, not to ignore the contribution of other stalwarts like Botticelli, Perugino and Raphael. Even in the times of the high-renaissance, Michelangelo had to go through the process of interaction with its inherent difficulties in egotistic relationships between powerful clients and rebellious creative minds. That Kanvinde was a great learner can be seen from the enthusiastic discussion he had with young architectural students even when he was in his mid eighties. I believe that there was a time when some commercial firms would poach and grab whoever worked for Kanvinde from his employment. The joke that went around at the time was that these firms would even poach and employ a peon in Kanvinde's office and give him design work in their offices! But it speaks volumes of the ~~work ethic and culture~~ Kanvinde had inculcated and inspired in his office through his presence, speech, professional and strict ethical approach, and his personal character among his disciples and staff. No wonder that



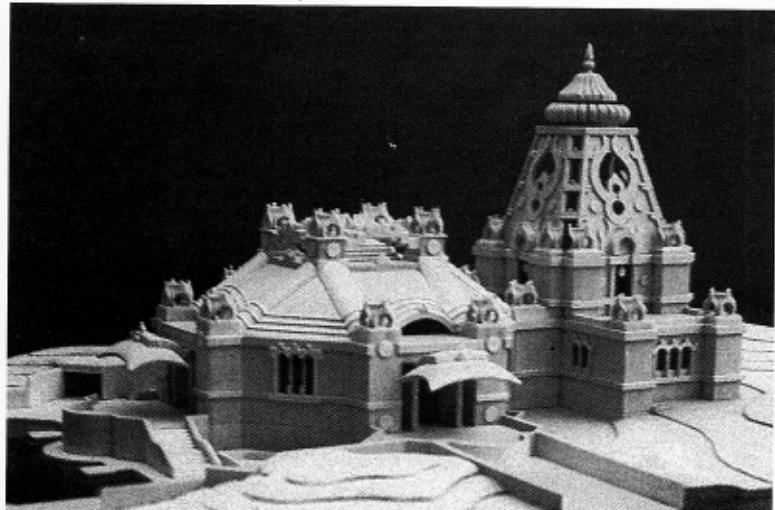
he would become a role model for many young architects who looked upon him as their mentor and guru.

Kanvinde had realised very early in his professional career the importance of making three dimensional models that explained his vision. He had to have very good wooden models that showed his conception of form-space relationship rather than the appearances of materials and finishes. His passion for and conviction in his works was apparent in the way he presented his projects to his clients. He was never shy of expressing his ideas boldly because of the fact that he was deeply convinced about them in his own mind. However this did not stop him from listening to criticism from others. His office building in Barakhamba road in New Delhi was thought to be 'heavy' and he pondered on it when told to him, saying 'it had not occurred' to him that way. I admired his sense of proportion and delicacy of detailing, which was seldom found in other architects' works. This obviously meant that he understood his structures well and knew exactly what to get out of his structural engineers. It was impossible to expect Kanvinde to simply accept whatever came from the structural engineers' office as the final word. He would debate and argue on the scale of structural members with his engineers and was a hard core follower of structuralism until much later in his works when he began designing temples. His approach reflected in the manner in which he resolved his thumbnail sketches into workable designs. He had built a good team of architects, engineers and draftsmen in his office that was capable of looking at the project holistically within the office. He also made room for Damle and Pathak, the structural engineers, who worked for some time from the same office and I also know for sure that even services engineers like plumbing expert Deolalikar owed much to him for making their respective disciplines emerge and shape in this country. To recognise the talent and need for a coordinated approach that looked at architectural priorities, rather than business, became the hallmark of the office of Kanvinde, Rai & Chaudhury.

In his personal life he kept in touch with his immediate and distant family and relatives. Although extremely design conscious he was very simple in personal life. He looked at the car as a means to travel- nothing more nothing less. He was religious in the ritualistic sense, which I found, at the time, contradictory to his rational approach to work. Recently someone told me of a German Philosopher who was a total atheist all his life but before his death he wrote in his will to bring his body into a particular

church before performing the burial-without any other rites! The rational- and the esoteric both have a point of meeting now and then, assuming different forms as needed, as it were. One may for instance ridicule the traditional architectural elements and features as 'decorative and excessively ornate' and negate entry of such elements in ones scheme of things. And on the other hand one may accept the seemingly unfathomable rhymes and rites and perform the havans at home on various occasions and not find it contradictory at all. Spirituality and religiosity are unavoidable and would crop up in thinking and architecture time and again. I had the occasion to go into the Vithoba temple at Pandharpur with Kanvinde. His faith and devotion were unquestionable. The same was seen in Kanvinde's temple architecture. I do not know of any contemporary colleges of architecture that talk of cultural studies and theories, recognising this fact and giving temple design as a design problem in the studio! How then do we expect a contemporary architect to be armed with the knowledge, which has filtered the traditional edifice, formally and metaphorically, in favour of a contemporary vision? Leave alone having a courageous dialogue on ones architecture, architects would simply go ahead with whatever they have resolved in terms of a building and call it architecture! A very successful architect practicing in Delhi once took Kanvinde to his newly built house with some pride but Kanvinde bluntly told him that he had missed the opportunity to do something new!

Concept Model for Ramkrishna Temple, Pune



Kanvinde's book on 'Campus Design for India' may be considered as an attempt to go into the study of traditional principles of campus design, as well as, to form his own vocabulary and strategy for campus design in India. He explained that architects must use history to take a direction from it rather than getting into it like historians. Historians and archaeologists had a different duty than architects, he would insist. He was never tired of examining ways and means of creating good ventilation tracks in his works. He evolved techniques of lighting and ventilation using natural energy and he articulated these gestures in his works so as to strengthen the form of his architecture. It became his imprint of a sort. He retained his sense of curiosity until his last and was fond of technology, even gadgets in day to day life. From pen-knives to soap holders, from designing folding chairs to appropriate window specimen, he untiringly and patiently looked into design issues and ably resolved them with a fine sense of detailing. His interests extended to city planning, which he articulated as member of the Delhi Urban Arts Commission, as well as, through his several contributions as adviser to various state governments. He made changes to his drawings until the drawing satisfied him. In those days the drawings were made on gateway tracing papers in pencil and erasing the pencil lines would leave deep grooves on the paper until eventually they tore and light came through them on the other side! But he insisted that one should be willing to make as many changes as one felt necessary because it was still cheaper to do so than to make changes in the actual building. He abhorred exhibitionism in architecture and insisted that architecture is not a museum of building materials.

We Indians have little regard for history or documenting archival material. We will talk rhetoric stuff better than actually treasuring history for further interpretation. Today, one finds that in Europe architects market themselves rather well. They start their archival office even before putting up a building worth the significance! The other extreme is the tragedy that even today we do not have a book on Achyut Kanvinde. We seem satisfied with small articles that glorify persons and personalities like him. We would rather conduct a ceremony by hiring auditoriums, felicitating some non entities, but are a zero when it comes to documenting with a sense of purpose. Kanvinde always said to throw the old stuff out- just like the body that would be discarded at death without any attachment to it. There would always be something new and the unknown.

## **ACHYUT KANVINDE: MODERN ARCHITECT OF TRADITIONAL NATION AND NOTIONS**

Yatin Pandya



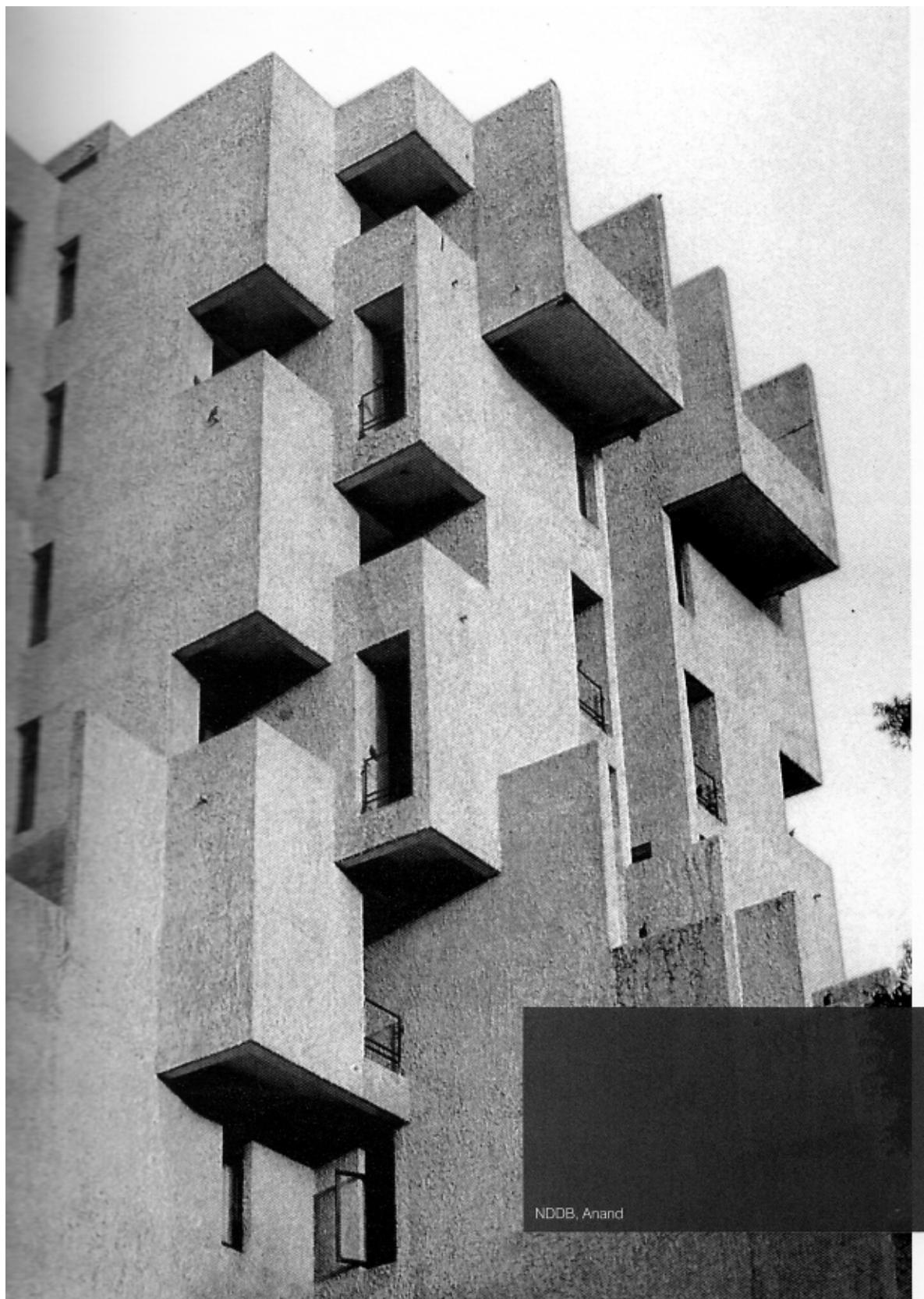
"...The crux of the matter is that we observe and assimilate and in the process we discover our selves. What we try to achieve or pursue in terms of aesthetics is a changing process. The aesthetics is essentially a conduct. Aesthetics and ethics are the products of the same thing..."

Architect Achyut Kanvinde's own quote summarises a lot about his persona, his works as well as his philosophy. While analysing or interpreting some one's work we tend to slot them in the convenient niches and cast within the mould we have created through our own premeditated construct. How wrong we tend to be when the products as such are the influences of the many overlapping dimensions of one's own life processes; the constant alchemy of person within the matrix of the given time and place. Kanvinde is most certainly one such example where he as a person, student, architect, teacher or mentor could not be isolated from one another. How much of him is a village

boy from Achara- Konkan with a modest middle class family background, how much of him is a prodigy of the colonial rendition of the Sir JJ College of Architecture (1935) and its master then Claude Bately? How much is he the reverberence of Walter Gropius, Bauhaus and international modernism along with the design sophistication of Harvard (1945)? How much is he the modernist of independent nation, how much of him is the socialist shadow of Varghese Kurien or the Scientist's rational of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai? Above all how much of him is a devout Indian at the stroke of independence?

Well, thing to admire about Mr. Kanvinde and learn from which, is that he was all of it and yet none of them in particular. He had the ability to discern. He had his conviction to stand by, moral ethics to uphold and adhere to the chosen path. He had the faith in the institution of man. He knew to absorb what best suited his vision of place and ethics of life and yet leave out the banality of style or escaped the slavery of isms and personalities, which in his circumstances was so easy to fall a trap off. It was one of the most challenging times for the architect to be in if we consider what Mr. Kanvinde was in. A village boy with Harvard education, at the nick of independence was asked to build, literally, a young aspiring nation. As head of CSIR (1947), as close confidante of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai's scientific/ technological missions and as consistent feature of Dr. Kurien's socialist, co-operative and rural development movements he had all the power and possibilities to define the path and mould the nation and young minds. He could have turned to his rural upbringing and reminisced the vernacular; he could have been ego centric and arrogant to scratch on the traditional soil alphabets of western modern- which although alien may have perhaps been viewed and passed as progressive. He could have been the convert to Gropius, and international masters to plaster the land with brutal concrete rendition and esoteric aesthetics, or been loyal to the colonial master and carried on with monumental edifices.

Thankfully he chose to remain regionally authentic yet modern rationalist. He chose the social responsiveness, optimism and progressiveness of Modernism. Humanly universal. He is one of the few architects who consciously attempted an application of the values of early modernism remaining unperturbed by passing isms or fanciful swings of time. He combined his exposure to technology and of avant-garde vision of



development with the rural upbringing in moral values and rootedness to its place and people. And this neither was a chance, pragmatism or compulsion. It perhaps was the conscious choice. These concerns are well echoed in his statement during the Lalit Kala Academy seminar that he himself organised soon after the realisation of Chandigarh and the debates spurred on Indian identity. He quipped, "Our architectural expression is in a most confused state as there is neither clear thinking nor definite ideology...the architects who are confronted with problems peculiar to modern functional design have to, at the same time, create an architectural expression that would reflect the present-day culture of India".

So he did. Refraining from the heroics as well as the rhetoric of international style he remained 'Functional Modernist'. He combined the flair of designer with the rational of the scientist. He integrated advances of the technology but integrated hand sewn craftsmanship along with. Prefabricated concrete in NDDB buildings, their modularity and expressions of concrete as un-plastered frames like outline of artist's

NDDB, Anand



sketch was pragmatically integrated with brick masonry wall infill as subtle representation of the local and handmade. He used his design skills to sculpt three dimensional forms but rather than esoteric abstractions, more as familial and associational deductions. For examples the dairy buildings or even institutional campuses got humanised through breaking of masses into associable cubes with terraces. Perceptible geometry with fathomable scale. Functional built mass interspersed with accessible open space. In the same syntax he pronounced the service nodes to balance the otherwise prominent master spaces. Stair mass and circulation core of a small residence like Harivallabhdas house in Ahmedabad (1968); or detached framed path with pergola as parallel structure at PRL (1953); or pronouncement of utility cores as pinnacles in Mehsana dairy building (1971-74) all personify the concerns for functional clarity, humanising the scale as well as aesthetic rigour.

Kanvinde was one of the first, and perhaps the only architect then, to create what can be true definitions as well as demonstrations of campus architecture. While IIT Kanpur campus, in 1957, was his first rendezvous with large educational campus and urban design with explorations in order and pragmatism, his later campuses for dairy development board-IRMA at Anand in 1978 were true development of campus prototype as functionally efficient yet aesthetically pleasant, dignified yet humane, international yet local, formally ordered yet full of spontaneity and pragmatism and so on... Perhaps programme and patron came closest to his rural roots and he felt at home with heart. ISKCON temple complex perhaps personifies how he managed to combine modernity and tradition. Not by forms but by sequence of spaces and movement. By scaling and positioning of un built space that provide for serenity, dignity as well as vitality. Even today, nearly after half a century in some cases, his buildings have retained their freshness and relevance. They are as contemporary, progressive and yet accessible and associable. Modesty and humility-hallmark of his persona is equally echoed in his building which are not loud and arrogant by form and scale but rather timeless in their spirit and experience.

Kanvinde has been a "Modern Indian" architect, in fact preceding the international Masters like Corbusier and Kahn in India. As such as per the anecdote described by Balkrishna Doshi, Le Corbusier visited ATIRA (1952) building of Kanvinde in Ahmedabad, which already was getting built in reinforced concrete frame and pilotes. Corbusier, although having

zeroed in on exposed concrete construction for his architectural edifices in India, was bit sceptic of its quality and outcome knowing it was still hand poured. Apparently quality and forms that he saw at ATIRA gave him the sense of conviction and confidence about his decision of using concrete-baton brut - in four landmarks of his in Ahmedabad.

As often quoted, "Kanvinde has built not only buildings but the builders of the buildings as well". Addressing the Indian architectural educators, he suggested, "The role which the schools have to play is to expose students to various situations and train them to cultivate and appreciate values so that they can experience and sharpen their senses through observation and practice", in other words, internalising the world around us. Architecture is a journey to be traversed and explored personally. In a country like ours with innumerable overlays time and expressions, the challenge lies in picking from the palimpsest a set of hieroglyphics or say the footprints and by selectively connecting them to chart our path. Dots of the graphs are only the references; the picture emerges only from how one connects those points. And that is the choice we all need to make, the responsibility we all have to measure up to in building our notions for shaping our very own nation...

IRMA, Anand



## ACHYUT KANVINDE REVISITED

Kiran Kalamdani



"Architecture is the synthesis of one's understanding and interpretation. It's a personal effort, backed by the cultivation, development and conviction of the person. Architecture of quality is one that stands the test of time." A P Kanvinde during his visit to Pune.

### The Kanvindian Rhetoric

At a point in time in this world where spirit of the place has come to sideline ideas about spirit of the age, do we stand to gain from an assessment of the work of a former twentieth century icon of Indian Architecture? Is there a lesson or two not only about how we make architecture but also how we live and carry our self around in this world that is becoming increasingly selfish, materialistic and intolerant? Can we gain fresh perspectives from how Achyut Kanvinde could achieve a subtle balance between the regional and the universal values to offer dignified expression to his buildings that speak of timelessness? In the architectural world that is growing vocal and

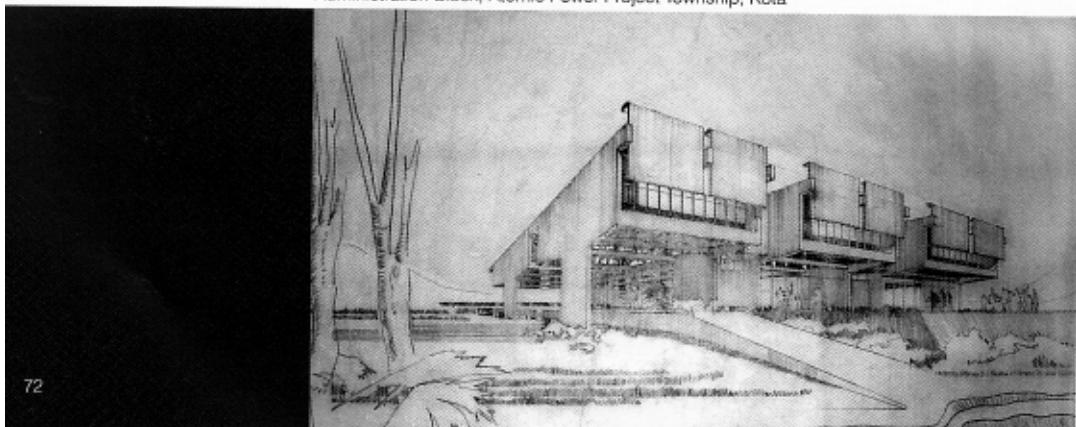
exhibitionist is there still a voice from the recent past that is so powerful in its silence? The muted, understated and dignified persona of the late Architect Achyut Kanvinde is an all time example for those who would care to take notice and perhaps imbibe. Humility and reticence are acclaimed hallmarks of his persona, which is one of the reasons his works have not been as widely known as they could be. Internationally acclaimed architect Charles Correa, while describing Kanvinde's work said that "he was one of the few young architects, to return to post-independent India after studies abroad. Moreover, besides making a decisive contribution to the architecture of the nation, not only for the quality of work itself, but also for the high ethical and professional standards brought to the practice of architecture."<sup>1</sup>

#### His Buildings Speak

Buildings that serve a cause and lay the foundations for a noble idea are a recurring feature of the practice over the long term. "Harvard educated, he designed and planned many institutional buildings for the Government IIT Kanpur, Universities of Agricultural Sciences in Bangalore and Rahuri (Maharashtra), Science Centres in Bombay and Delhi, are only a few of his creations. Gujarat, Rajasthan and Kashmir were also blessed with his buildings".<sup>2</sup>

The NIBM (National Institute of Bank Management completed 1985 by the RBI) and NIA (National Insurance Academy completed 1991) are two institutes located to the Southeast and Northwest of Pune City that were born out of the ideas to take the banking and insurance sectors to the

Administration Block, Atomic Power Project Township, Kota





National Insurance Academy, Pune

rural areas and training officials for it. It would not be incorrect to say that he managed to work closely with the cause of the establishment giving it a suitable architectural form, meaning and purposefulness.

#### Context of Pune and its Implications on Design

Since 1820 the city of Pune was seen by the British to be more conducive to locate institutions and starting with the Deccan College, College of Engineering, College of Agriculture and the like. There have been a large number of Institutions that have been set up. Most of these colonial institutions were built in dressed local basalt stone on the exterior and plastered brickwork on the insides. The nineteenth century buildings are a reflection of the confusion of architectural styles ranging from Palladian Neo-Classicism to Gothic Revival to Romanesque revival. While Kanvinde's buildings use their large campuses for the various academic administrative and residential functions, they share the spaciousness of the older campuses without resorting to monument making or emulating details or fragments of earlier architecture. The use of a geometric grid for the structure and the use of the local basalt stone either for composite stone & brick masonry or as grit finish plaster is the extent to which the buildings express its region. While many other architects and critics of the time were hankering for an 'Indian Identity', Kanvinde acknowledged the 'Universal', remained neutral and espoused the functional, climatic and humane values in his architecture, a difficult but confident stand considering the fact that many in the profession would be swayed by the fashions, critics and popular isms to be counted amongst the avant-garde.

#### The Intellectual Context

"Despite the gradual weakening of social idealism and the faltering stature of modernism, Kanvinde and Islam (Architect Mazarul Islam of Bangladesh) have remained more or less steadfast in their commitment to a rationalist rigour and a modernist vocabulary. They have continued to define modernism not only as a formal creation but in its ethical and existential dimensions, to articulate the exigency of time but often to counter the tyranny of tradition."<sup>3</sup>

His teaching exploits included stints at School of Planning and Architecture, University of California, Berkeley, Washington and Illinois. Addressing the Indian architectural educators, he suggested, "The role which the schools have to play is to expose students to various situations and train them to cultivate and appreciate values so that they can experience and sharpen their senses through observation and practice".

#### Recognition in India and Oblivion Outside

In 1947 Kanvinde got his Masters degree in architecture from Harvard University. He came back to be appointed as the Chief Architect of CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research). After a prolific period of eight years when he built a host of works, mostly new industrial laboratories, he resigned in 1955 to form Kanvinde Rai Chaudhary, one of the most influential and productive architectural practices of India. In 1976 he became the President of the Indian Institute of Architects and won the Gold Medal of the Indian Institute of Architects in 1985. Kanvinde was awarded the Padmashree by the Govt. of India but he remains relatively lesser known outside India despite his prolific work. On his part there was never this narcissistic craving to project and examine oneself among his contemporaries across the world (perhaps a trait of his modest beginnings and the cultural influences in formative stages of his character). The international press continues to ignore his work and wherever his name is mentioned it is often overshadowed by those of his contemporaries. But for some who care to examine his case and even emulate it, the realization of his humble genius is very evident.

#### Problems of Materials and Modern Architecture

As the effects of experimentation with new materials by modern architects are now becoming increasingly evident, the problems of modern architecture and the loss of traditional wisdom with materials and techniques are being investigated. There is a rapid deterioration of



cement based structures and repairs are being conducted too often and at a heavy price. Conservation of works of Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier at Chandigarh are areas of major challenge, and these will soon be seen with buildings by Indian architects. Cement as a primary bonding material with buildings of the past century poses enormous problems. Within a few years time Kanvinde's buildings will need to be assessed in a similar light. The criteria for excellence in Modern Architecture may not be how long or well the buildings last but how well they served the people and time for which they were built. This in turn will focus on the production of contemporary buildings, the materials and technology used and Kanvinde's own quote about 'quality is the one that stands the test of time' will be tested.

<sup>1</sup> devayanis@indiatimes.com Devayani Shahane in *The Times of India*

<sup>2</sup> Roopa, Editor's Note, *A Requiem*, southasian.com, February 2003

<sup>3</sup> Kazi Khaled Ashraf & James Belluardo in *Crossing boundaries* by Geeti Sen, Orient Blackswan

## ACHYUT KANVINDE - A GEOMETRICAL ANALYSIS OF ARCHITECTURAL PLANS

Chetan Sahasrabudhe



The following pages contain an analysis of the plan geometry as seen in Ar. Kanvinde's Architecture. The method is not new. It was first used by Harmen Thies in his analysis of European Baroque churches (*Thies, Harmen. 'Analysis and Reconstruction: The Residence and Church in Wurzburg and the "Temple of Jews" in Wörlitz.'* *Historic Cities and Sacred Cities: Cultural Roots for Urban Futures*- ed Ismail Serageldin, Ephim Shluger, Joan Martin-Brow. *The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank*, 2001). It was subsequently used by Klaus-Peter Gast in his analysis of the works of Louis Kahn and Le Corbusier. It consists entirely of geometrical analysis of the architectural plan or the 'horizontal dimension' of an Architects work. The analysis is presented as starting from a simple figure like a square or a rectangle and ending with an architectural plan. It is essentially a linear process, even though we are aware that any good design is almost always a product of a non linear process. It is important therefore that such an analysis

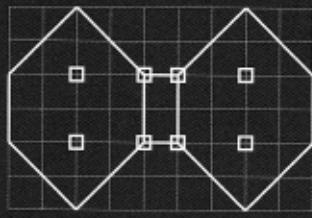
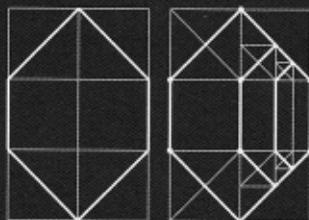
is not confused with a representation of the design process undergone by the Architect. Rather the process would somewhere be between formulation of a design idea and its final translation into a working plan. So what we get is a viewpoint for looking at an Architect's work without really forcing any qualitative judgement on to the reader. Klaus Peter has also been criticized for the use of this approach (*Fleming, Steven and Michael J. Ostwald, "Review of Le Corbusier: Paris-Chandigarh", Nexus Network Journal, vol. 3, no. 2 Spring 2001*) the main objection being lack of dimensional evidence in the form of working drawings which is true for the present analysis also.

What use then is such an analysis for understanding the work of Architect Kanvinde? Firstly Kanvinde's reputation as a disciplined designer makes his work ideal for just such an analysis. Secondly it highlights the rigorous process of form development that he may have gone through for his projects and finally it demonstrates some of the 'gambits', to use the term employed by Lawson, and deployed by this Master Architect.

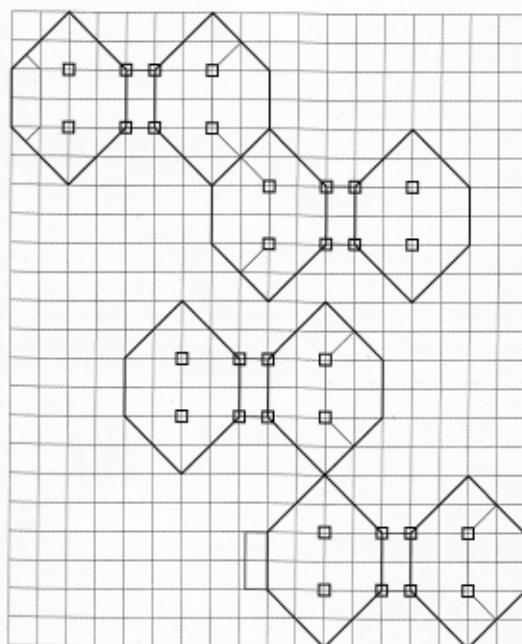
In case of Kanvinde's designs the analysis does not come through as independent of thinking about structure, function and the climate. He manages to ingeniously weave his concerns for clarity in structure, distribution of functions and response to climate into his plans without compromising the geometrical clarity or rather to highlight the geometrical anchors. Though always recognized as a staunch modernist, Kanvinde comes through as an architect who used a number of form making tools from history. From his early and recurrent use of Alberti's 2:3 rectangle (IIT Kanpur Library), to his use of the irregular octagon plan (used widely by Mughals both in isolation and in combination) and the interesting use of the Vastu Purusa Mandala (ISKON Temple at New Delhi) Kanvinde builds in subtle cultural codes into his plans with increasing rigour.

## Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai

The entire plan is based on a module derived from a rectangle of proportion 2:3.



Model, Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai



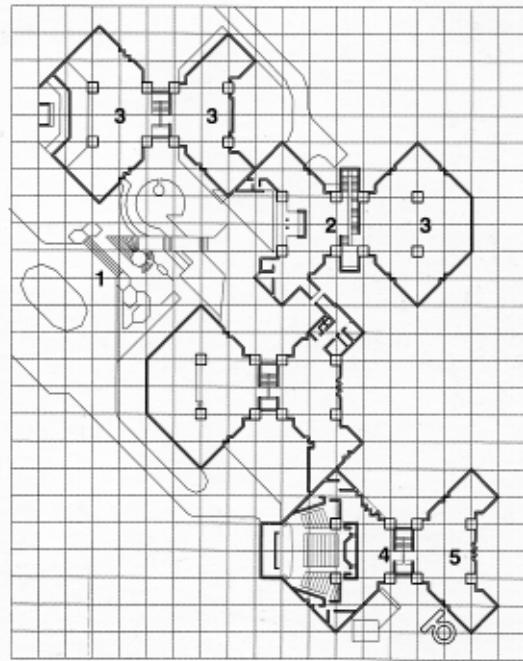
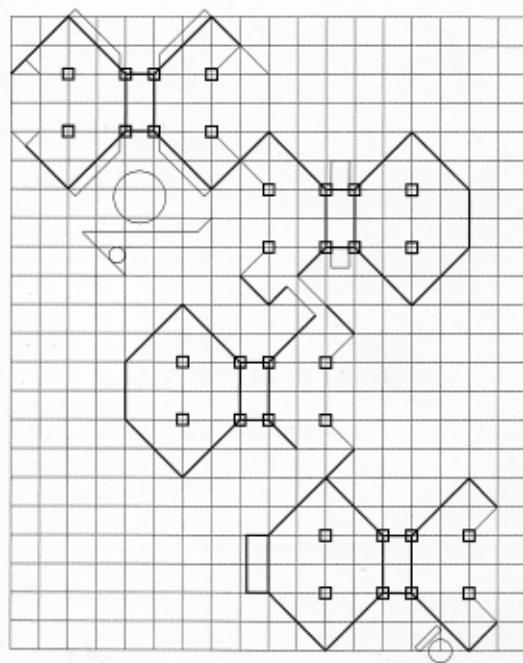
Further iterations of the module give smaller modules that are used at various locations within the plan.

Two modules placed next to each other and separated by a quarter module, gives the planning unit. The junctions of these become the structural pivots which double as ventilation shafts. An arrangement of four such units on the site completes the built footprint.

These modules are sculpted by the iterative form generated from the parent module. The resultant configuration is further detailed using the modular grid laid on the plan.

- 1 ENTRANCE
- 2 ENTRANCE HALL
- 3 DISPLAY AREA
- 4 AUDITORIUM
- 5 LIBRARY

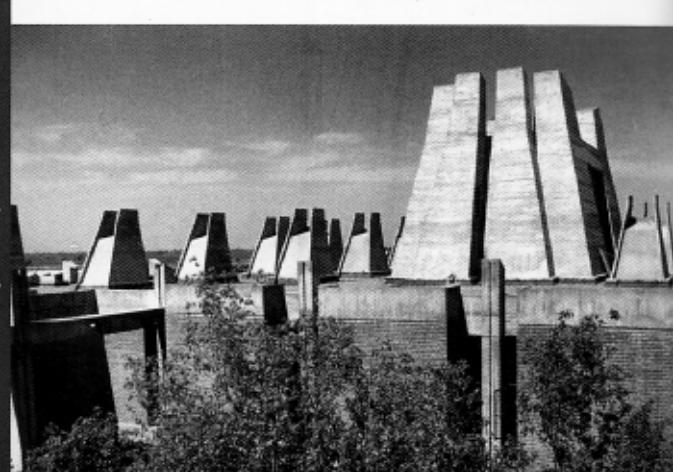
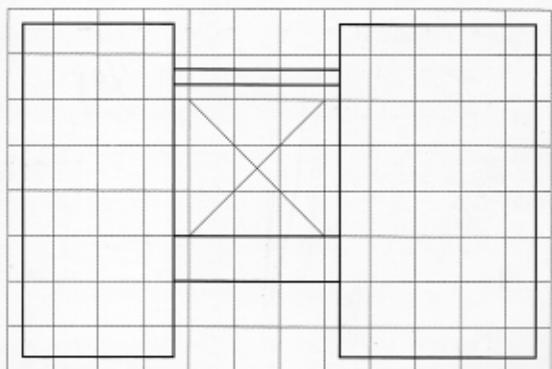
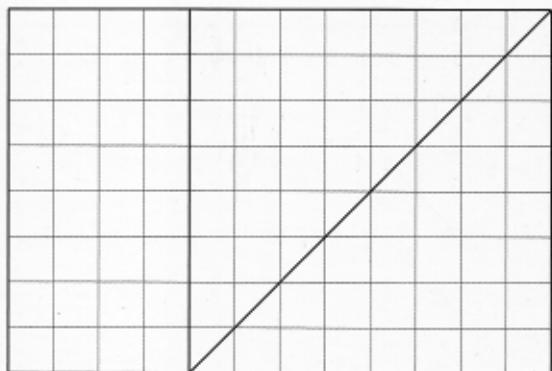
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



## Library, IIT, Kanpur

The entire plan is in the ratio of 2:3, a proportion used extensively by the Renaissance Architect Alberti.

The plan is organized as two blocks connected by an atrium. Even with such a composition Kanvinde attempts to retain the identity of the original square by aligning the edge of the courtyard to the implicit square.

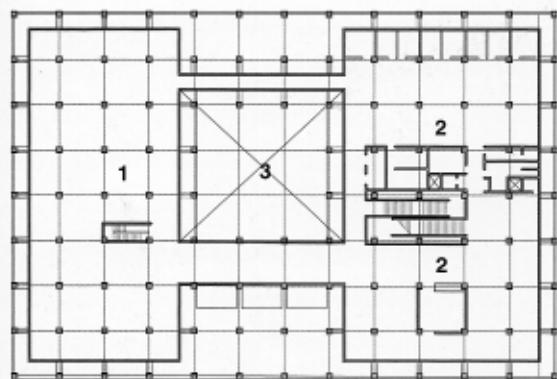




Library, IIT, Kanpur

1 JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS  
2 READING AREA  
3 SUNKEN GARDEN BELOW

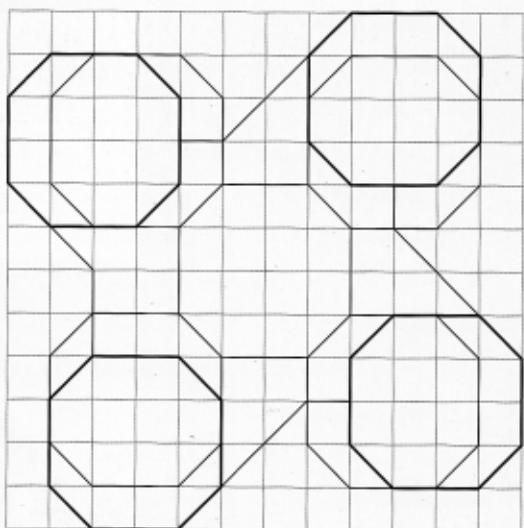
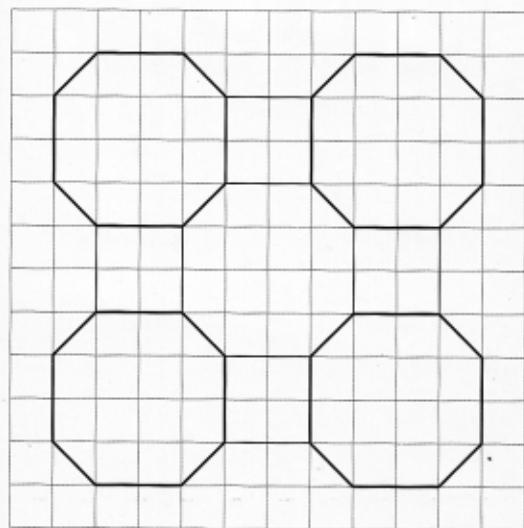
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



**Institute Of Rural  
Management (IRMA),  
Library Building,  
Anand.**

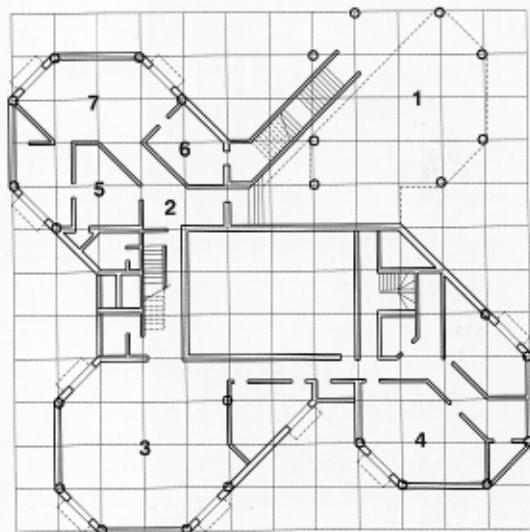
The plan begins with five irregular octagons arranged in a square of size 10 modules by 10 modules. The formal organization gives five served spaces and four servant areas. The plan at this stage bears a strong resemblance with the plan of Humayun's Tomb near Nizamuddin village at Delhi.

The next transformation rotates the four peripheral octagons around the central octagon in an anticlockwise direction by one module each. This gesture brings in a lot of movement in the static Mughal composition. The result is also an increase in the servant areas without losing the spatial organization. Extension of one side of each octagon further aids in articulating the plan on upper levels.



1 ENTRANCE  
2 LOBBY  
3 READING AND STACKS  
4 CIRCULATION DESK  
5 OFFICE  
6 PUNCHING ROOM  
7 COMPUTER ROOM

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



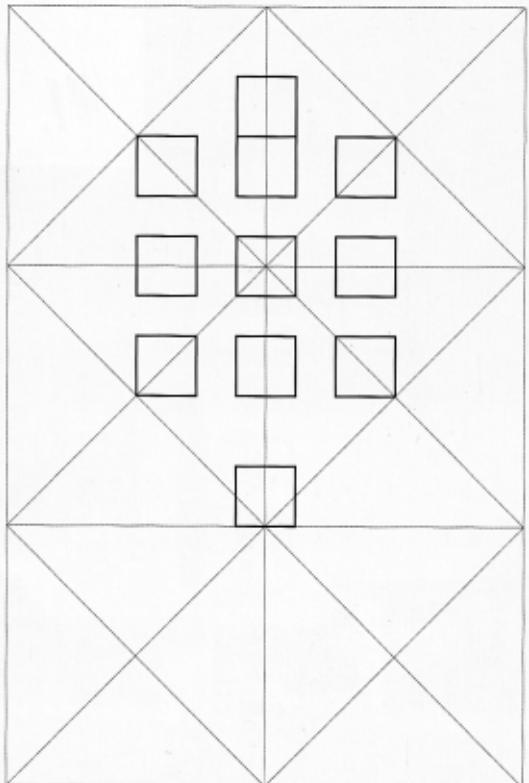
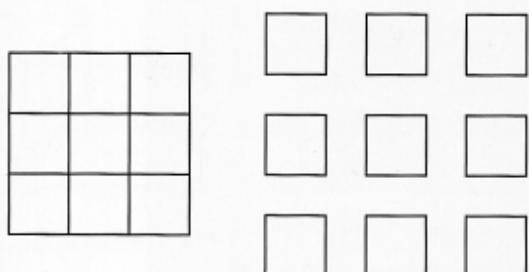
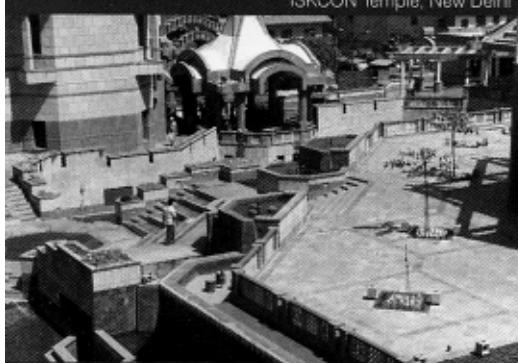
Library, IRMA, Anand, Gujarat



### ISKCON Parthasarathy Temple, New Delhi

The plan for ISKCON Temple starts with the nine square mandala which is then exploded.

The corners of this exploded mandala when joined gives the by now ubiquitous rectangle of 2:3 proportion.



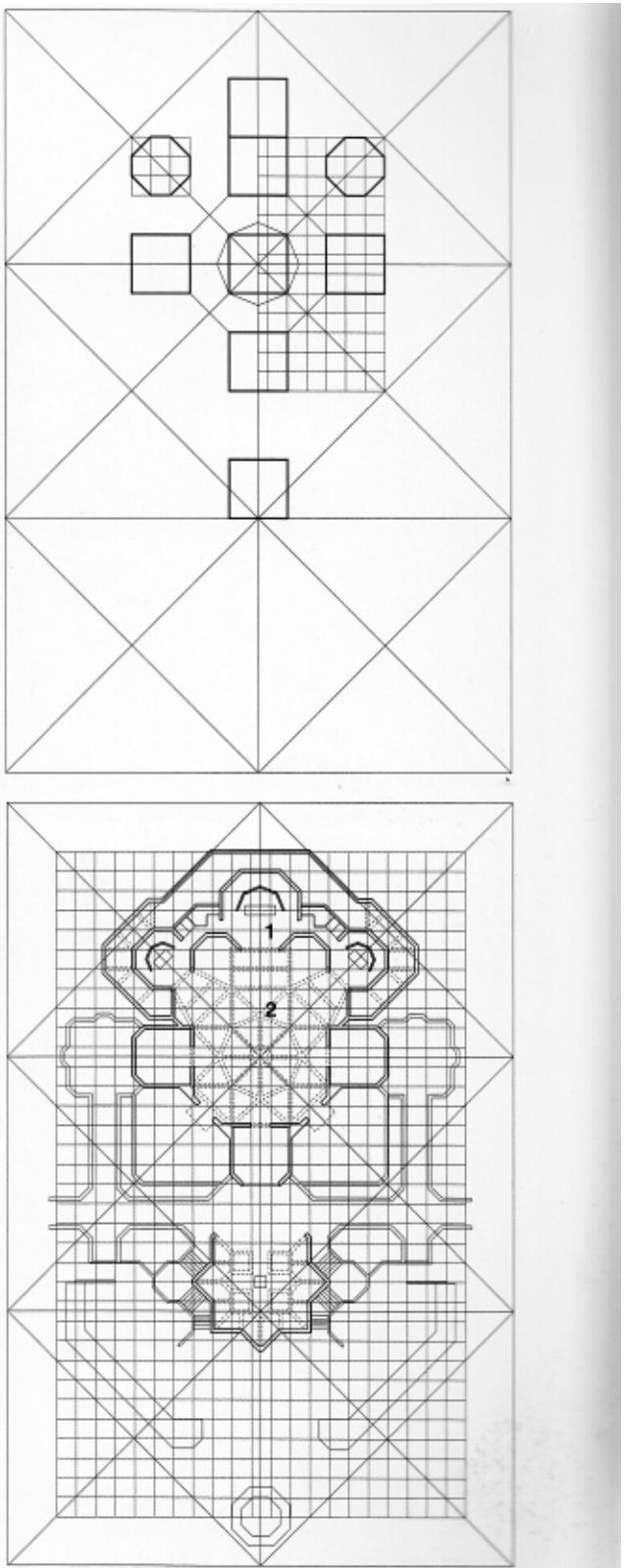


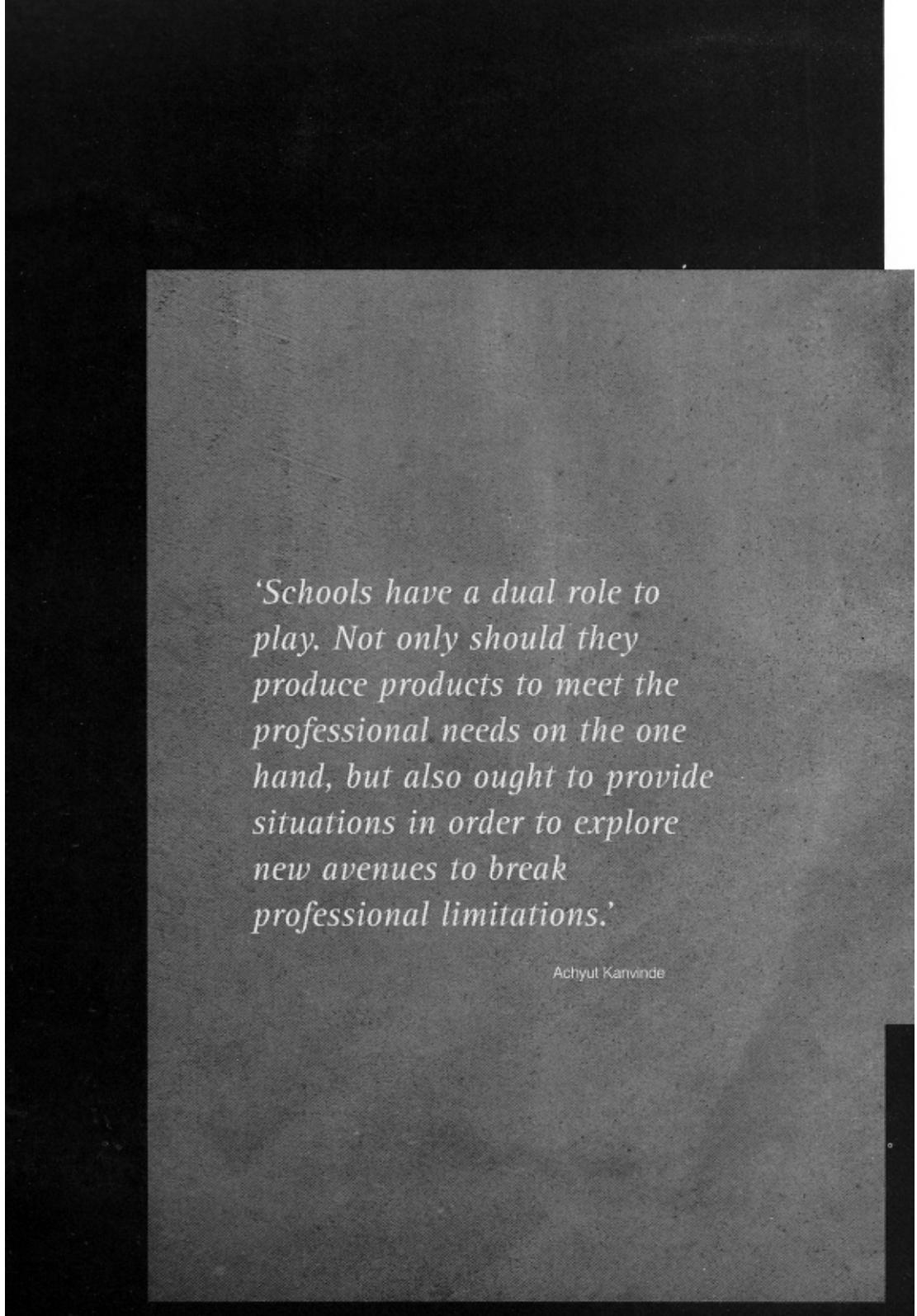
ISKCON Temple, New Delhi

This base geometry is further subdivided to aid in formulation of irregular octagons. The vertices of these octagons help in organizing the structural system and alignment of various spaces.

- 1 GARBHA GRIHA
- 2 SABHA MANDAPA

**PART GROUND FLOOR PLAN**





*'Schools have a dual role to play. Not only should they produce products to meet the professional needs on the one hand, but also ought to provide situations in order to explore new avenues to break professional limitations.'*

Achyut Kanvinde

## WRITINGS AND EXCERPTS

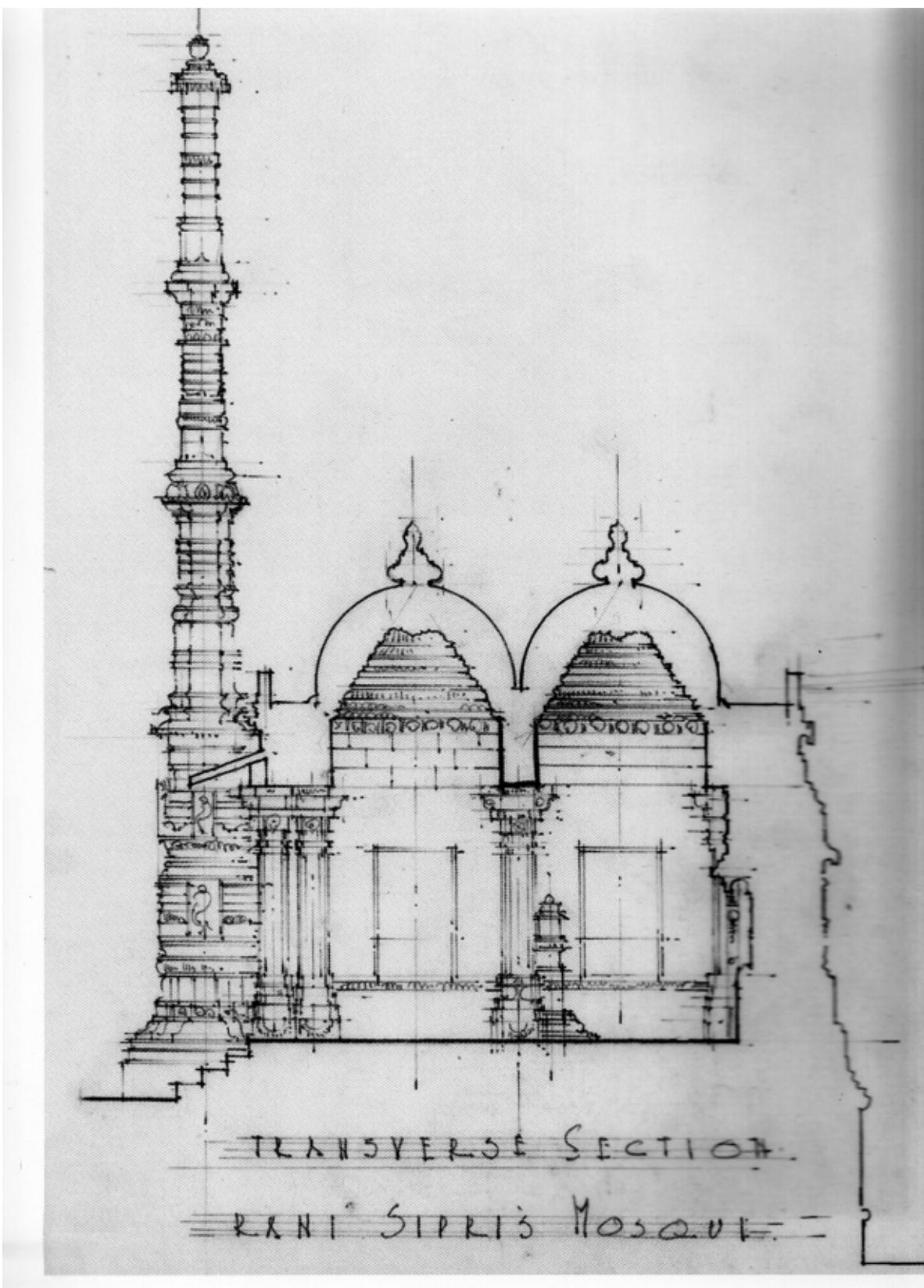
NSC, New Delhi





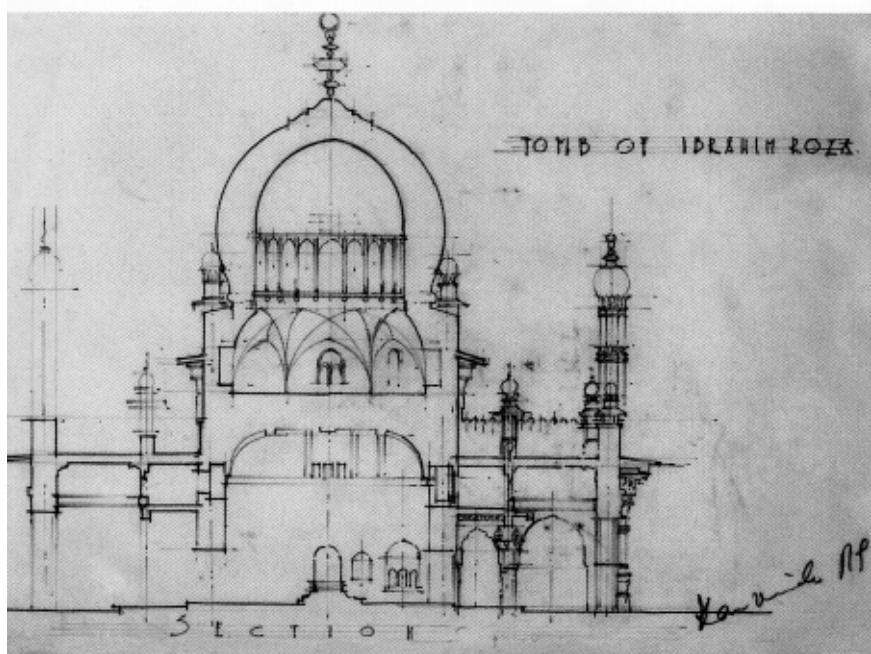
*'I feel that the real challenge of our time is to synthesize urban strategies in a way that both the well-to-do elite and affluent class of population, as well as the downtrodden, have common sharing of urban social structures. This would ensure a realistic future for the emerging new citizen. Equally important is to cherish the past and recognise the importance of conservation in relating the new urbanisation with inspiration drawn from our ancient heritage.'*

Ganju, Ashish M.N. Achyut P. Kanvinde- Doyan of Indian Architecture. Vistara

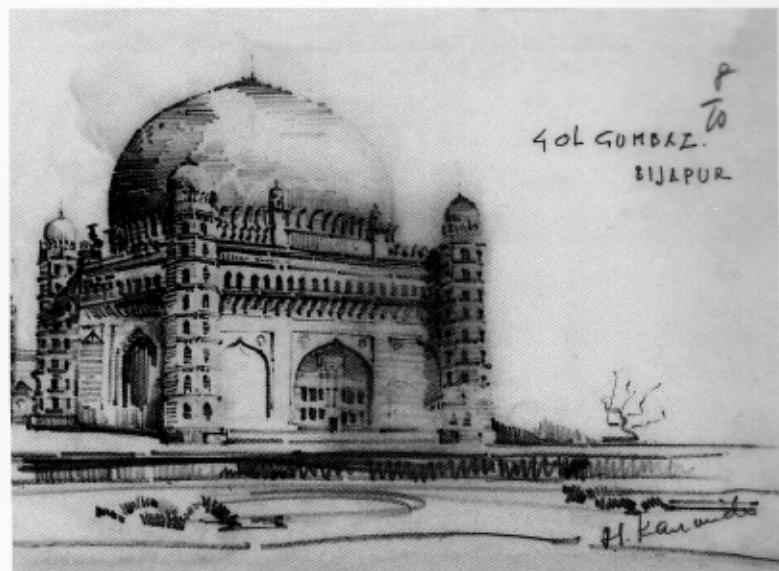




*'( ) I believe believe design is a subjective interpretation and its critic has to have his freedom to interpret and express. Architectural practice is a never-ending process which one keeps on accumulating experiencing as one progresses.'*



Ray Shaunak in conversation with A P Kanvinde. "In Search of Immesurable Values". Architecture + Design. Vol XXI no. 12. Pg 90-92. Media Transasia India Ltd. New Delhi, December 2004

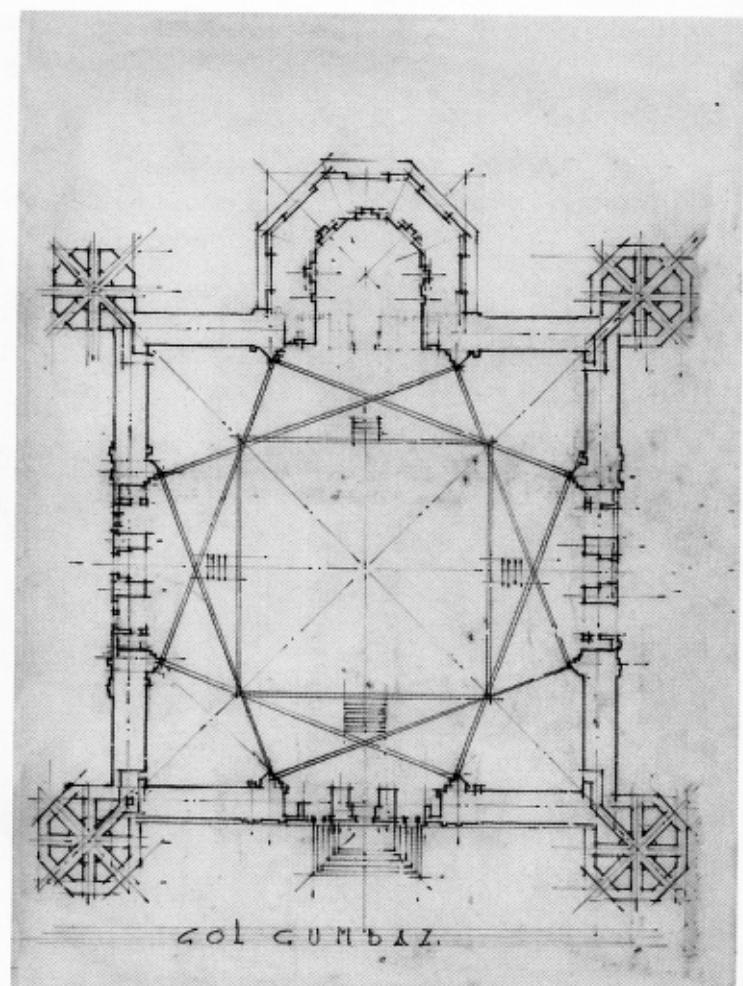


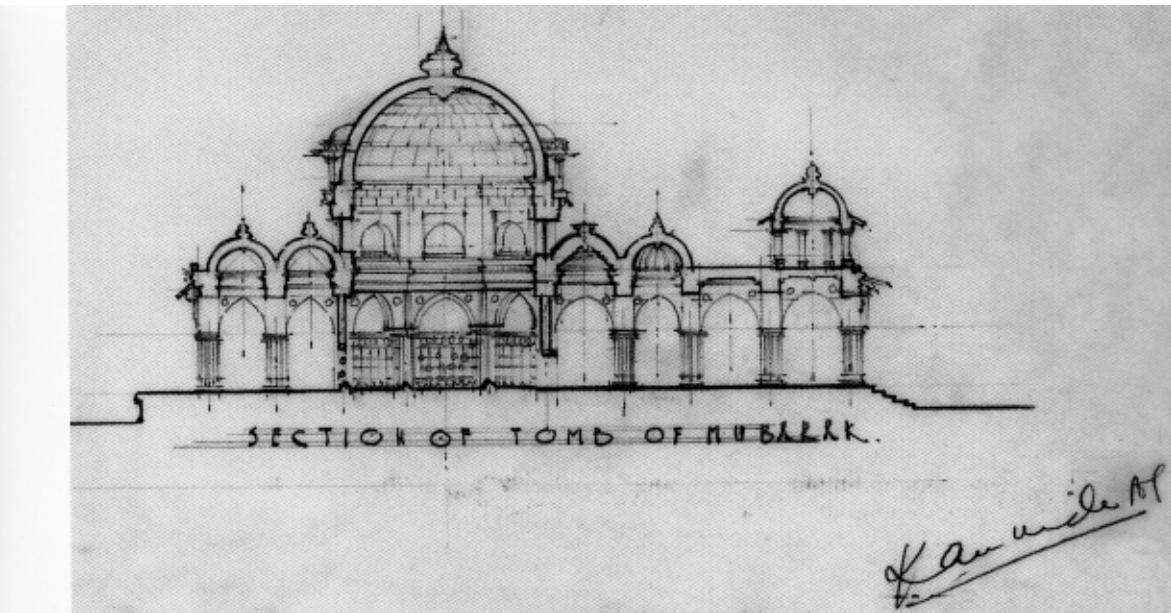
*'The architects who are confronted with problems peculiar to modern functional design have to, at the same time, create an architectural expression that would reflect the present day culture of India.'*

Serenyi, Peter. 'Ethics and Aesthetics: an architect and his values'. *Architecture + Design*. Vol 1 no.4. Pg 14-17. Media Transasia India Ltd. New Delhi, May-June 1985

*'Quality education will emerge only if backed by a political will with a clear government policy. Akbar and Shahjahan had no formal education but they had an involvement which brought about complexes like Fatehpur Sikri and Shahjahanabad. In the recent past, in Paris, it was General De Gaulle in the early sixties and also Mitterand in the mid-seventies who created enthusiasm for architecture'.*

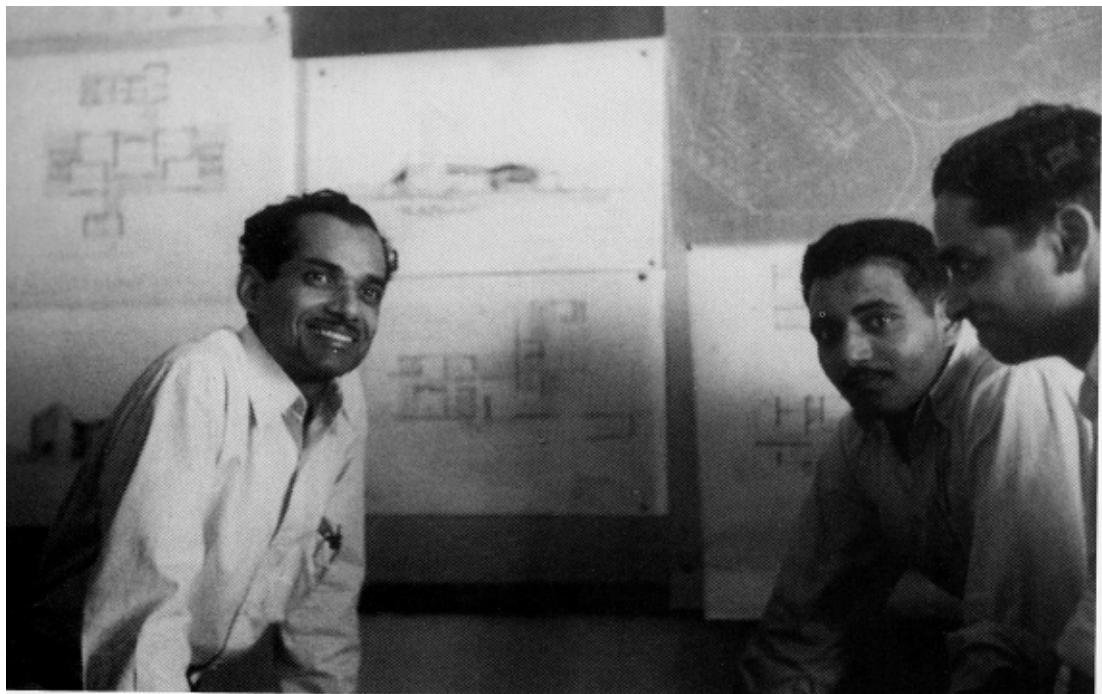
Kanvinde, Achyut P.  
'An Observation'.  
Architecture +  
Design, Vol XV no.1.  
Pg 82, Media  
Transasia India Ltd.  
New Delhi, Jan-Feb  
1998





*(Firstly) I ( ) would like to see architects get into politics. ( ) All architects, I believe, cannot and need not be designers. Some are capable of doing better business and some have other skills, like salesmanship. Secondly, I think NGOs can be formed who could speak up in connection to building as a community activity. Only when people demand as one voice, would they be heard. Thirdly, there is the issue of the press and the other media, since their opinions do influence those in the government. It is imperative ( ) to influence the opinion of the decision-makers - the political leaders. Equally important is to create an appreciation amongst the public about architecture through the media and exhibitions.*

Ray Shaonak in conversation with A P Kanvinde. "In Search of Immesurable Values". Architecture + Design. Vol XXI no. 12. Pg 90-92. Media Transasia India Ltd. New Delhi, December 2004



Kanvinde at his Office

## QUEST FOR QUALITY IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISATION

Achyut P Kanvinde

### Introduction

Urban environment in a given situation is the product of continuity in the pattern of human settlement, utilising available resources in a way that it tends to develop structure of form fulfilling human aspiration.

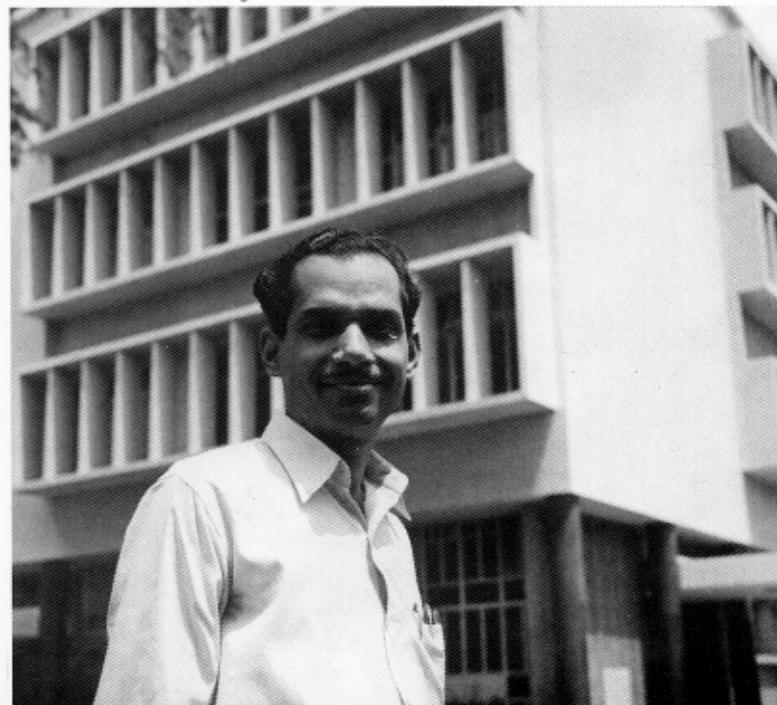
The present time has made advancement with respect to technology in terms of mobility, communication, industrialization, commerce and marketing on one hand, as well as a progress with regard to recognising values associated with human environment in terms of customs and culture, associated with regions, and heritage of faith and values. It goes without saying that a community needs to maintain its possessions meaningfully with purpose. In the present situation, in spite of the progress of technology and changes in the physical pattern, the urge to recognize human values becomes the need of time and is a challenge before urban designers.

#### Cities of the Past

Historical examples show that settlement like Shahjahanabad, Jaipur city, Fatehpur Sikri and several others did not exceed a population of forty to fifty thousand as a city of more than that scale was not possible to support with the technology of the time and resources at hand. However, modern technology shows the possibility to establish an urban fabric and form that can support a population of more than ten million and this already exists in our major urban centres. Whereas several progressive nations are utilising knowledge and resources meaningfully, a country like India, in spite of technology and a cultural base, has somehow not been able to make a mark, which can be seen from the functioning of our cities presently.

It is demonstrated time and again that right ideas initiated at the highest level backed by political will and patronage have achieved results. Shah Jahan, Akbar and ruler Jai Singh could demonstrate this by building cities in their time with determination and personal involvement. The same can

Kanvinde at the CSIR Building





Nehru, Kanvinde & Rai at the inauguration of the Gangaram Hospital, 1950s

be said about western examples like that of building the city of Paris by Louis, the Fourteenth. In present times, there are three countries in the world where there is a positive patronage to architecture and work of art. These are France, Spain and Finland. Mitterand, past President of France, while organising the bi-centenary event of the industrial revolution in the early seventies, a twenty billion dollar project, went out of his way to personally invite and commission important projects to internationally acclaimed architects, achieving outstanding results.

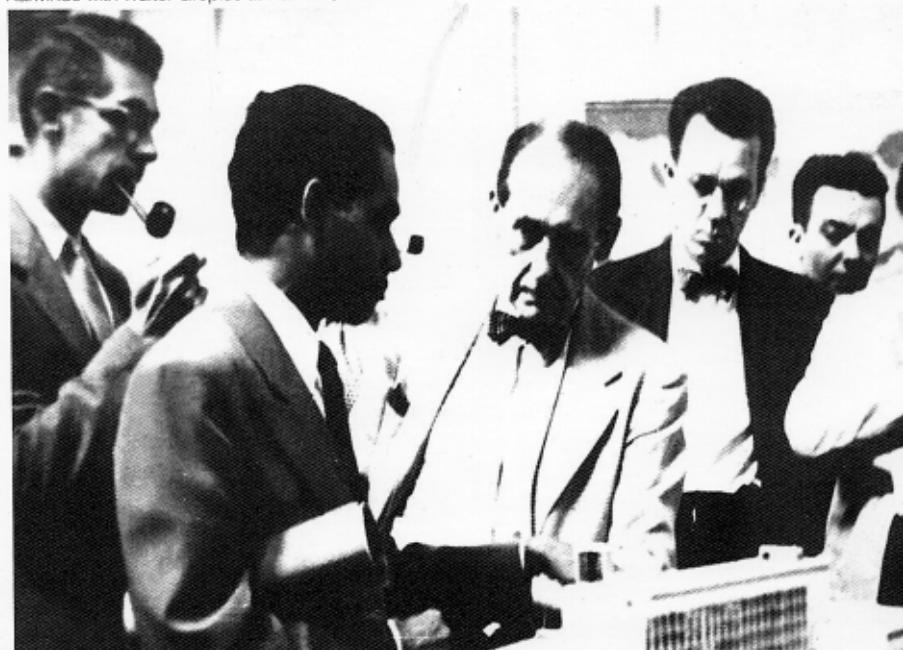
#### Contextual Design

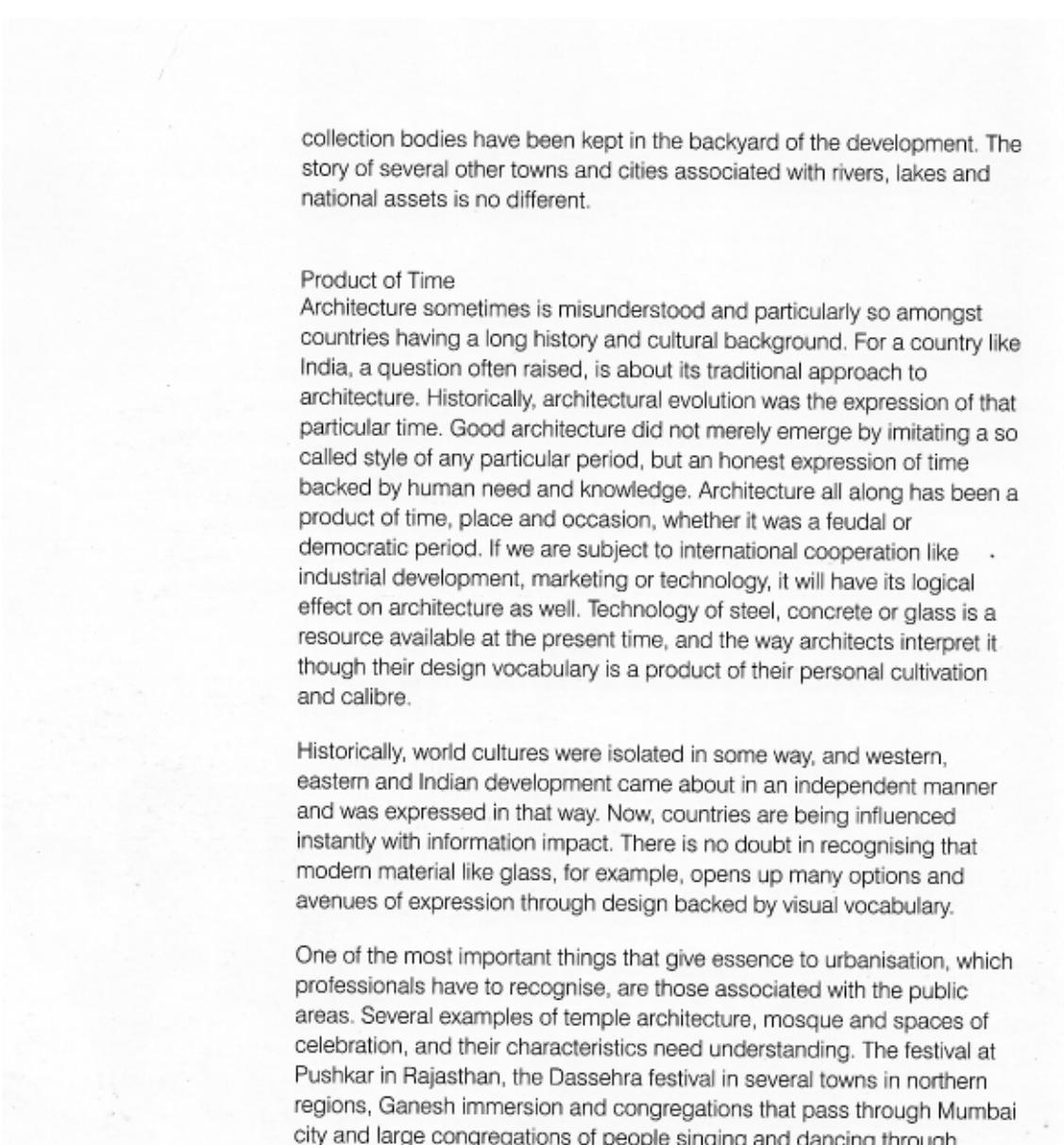
In the context of the Indian situation, the professional role of the architect, planner and urban designer is not primarily recognised amongst political leaders, government administration, as also public in general. Although we see development authorities exist in most of the cities in India, one would realise that their work broadly ends with road pattern layout mainly, and distributing land through auctions thereafter. One would expect to see some important projects worked out in three dimensional urban form as significant statements before land is disposed off. It is time that authorities think of attempting processes backed by ideals that will be rewarding. A picture of urban development in all major cities of the country shows that no efforts are been made to recognise essential values emerging out of the site that could give a deeper meaning of achievement to the development. It was possible in the case of Delhi in the early sixties when its population had not touched the two million mark and when the Town Planning Act had just come into force, to think of introduction of a system

of open spaces linking Yamuna river and the ridge, embracing an important monument within the framework of spaces, around which the city design could have been conceived. Ring Railway, which was proposed during Pandit Nehru's Government around the mid fifties, would have resulted in tying district centres along a rail loop with a radiating road system which would have contributed to easing city traffic. However such a thing was not envisaged and a great opportunity lost.

Bombay, likewise, had the possibility of introducing a system of open spaces in form of fingers, tying the sea front and the land mass in the east west direction which could have become places of leisure and recreation for people. Instead, sea spaces are walled up with land speculation to serve the interest of a selected few. In the case of New Bombay, likewise, with the landmass lower than the high tide sea level, there was the possibility of introduction of a water canal and water body similar to Amsterdam in Netherlands and Venice in Italy. Instead, these water

Kanvinde with Walter Gropius at Harvard, 1946





collection bodies have been kept in the backyard of the development. The story of several other towns and cities associated with rivers, lakes and national assets is no different.

#### Product of Time

Architecture sometimes is misunderstood and particularly so amongst countries having a long history and cultural background. For a country like India, a question often raised, is about its traditional approach to architecture. Historically, architectural evolution was the expression of that particular time. Good architecture did not merely emerge by imitating a so called style of any particular period, but an honest expression of time backed by human need and knowledge. Architecture all along has been a product of time, place and occasion, whether it was a feudal or democratic period. If we are subject to international cooperation like industrial development, marketing or technology, it will have its logical effect on architecture as well. Technology of steel, concrete or glass is a resource available at the present time, and the way architects interpret it through their design vocabulary is a product of their personal cultivation and calibre.

Historically, world cultures were isolated in some way, and western, eastern and Indian development came about in an independent manner and was expressed in that way. Now, countries are being influenced instantly with information impact. There is no doubt in recognising that modern material like glass, for example, opens up many options and avenues of expression through design backed by visual vocabulary.

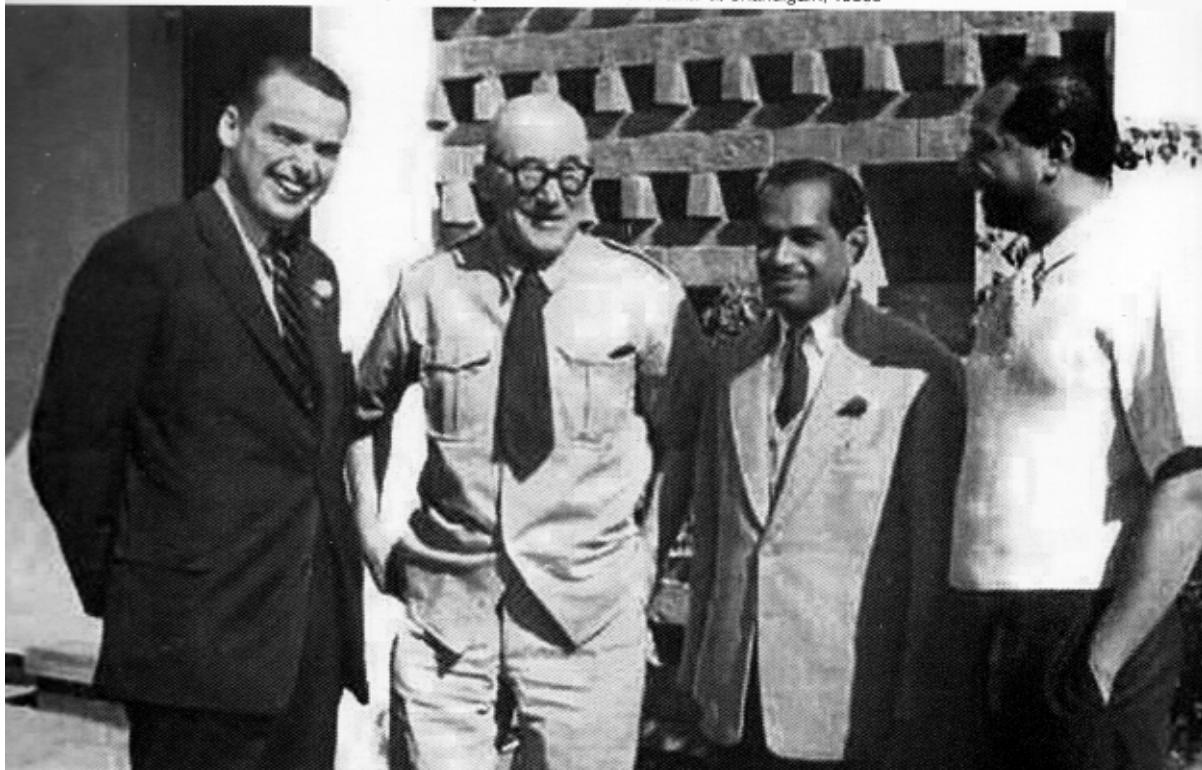
One of the most important things that give essence to urbanisation, which professionals have to recognise, are those associated with the public areas. Several examples of temple architecture, mosque and spaces of celebration, and their characteristics need understanding. The festival at Pushkar in Rajasthan, the Dassehra festival in several towns in northern regions, Ganesh immersion and congregations that pass through Mumbai city and large congregations of people singing and dancing through streets of Pune, on the way towards Alandi and Pandharpur as well as the congregation around the Golden Temple at Amritsar, and several others are events which create a strong impact where they complement the setting and vice versa. These are experiences to observe and such events should be related to urban planning and design. It needs no mention that

Id congregations at Jama Masjid and the Dassehra festivity in Delhi ought to have created notable public spaces. What really gives meaning to urbanisation is something beyond immediate matter of fact needs and that events mentioned above with building setting and resulting urban form become memorable life forces and values associated with the habitation.

#### Public Acceptance

It has been observed in the recent past that a work of architecture is often received with great admiration initially but it loses interest, and sometimes develops prejudices in course of time. It was sometime in the early fifties when Corbusier designed Unite d'Habitation at Marseilles. It influenced the younger generation of Architects. Yamasaki, known U.S. Architect, designed a multi-storeyed building known as Pruitt Igoe scheme to accommodate Negro slum dwellers at St. Louis, U.S. and another building

Jeanneret, Corbusier, Kanvinde and Prabhavalkar at Chandigarh, 1950s



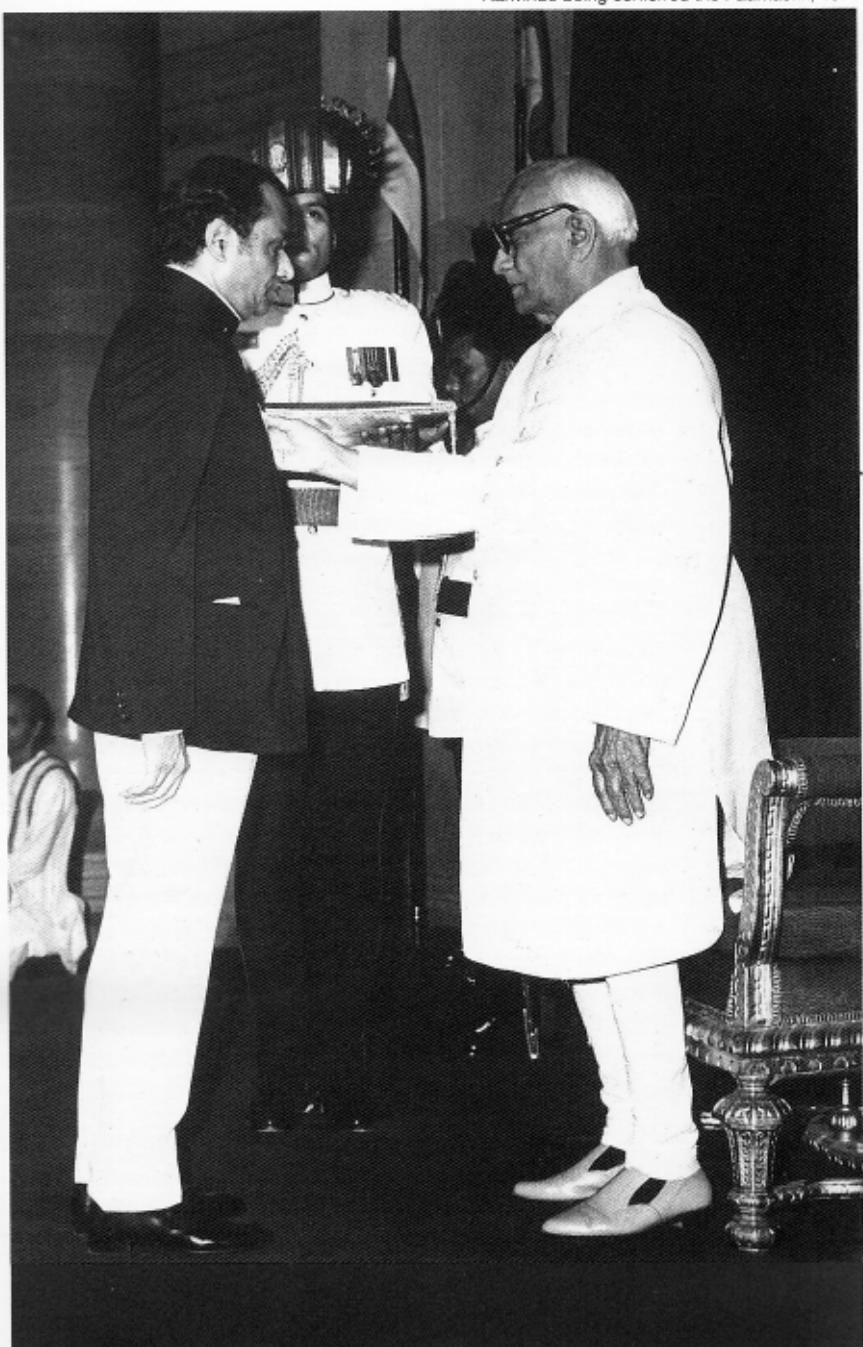
named Fallingworth Tower in London was designed on the pattern of Unit d'Habitation. Based on the subsequent findings of the Social Science Department of Washington University, such buildings with lack of spaces for movement of children result in juvenile delinquency amongst children and develop prejudice in people. Both the above projects were dynamited sometime in the early seventies. The Habitation project designed by Corbusier at Marseilles, so also the one in West Berlin is presently occupied to one third of its capacity, though they were popular when they were newly built, when people were willing to pay more than double the amount to possess an Apartment.

Similarly, the famous Lake Shore Apartments in Chicago, designed by Mies van der Rohe were received with great celebration when they were new. However there was resentment of people for its unfriendly design qualities some time after ten years. In case of the Spanish Pavilion, also designed by him in the early thirties, though it had the needed publicity by the media, was not taken note of by people. However, it has become famous after thirty years, in the early sixties, and was considered as one of the most important projects of this century.

When the writer happened to meet Corbusier sometime during the early fifties, he asked him about the kind of city he was contemplating for Chandigarh Township. Without answering the question directly he began describing qualities about St. Marks at Venice, with places like positioning about the church, Dodge Palace, Campanile shopping areas, restaurant etc. and the manner in which it attracts people from morning till late night. St. Marks complex is a development of about a thousand years of work of a team of generations of rulers and their architects, together in an organized manner. Each generation that came into picture contributed to the future while complementing the past in a harmonious manner without disturbing the unity of the Complex. Ten years later, when Chandigarh Complex took form with respect to the Capitol Complex consisting of the Secretariat, Assembly Hall, High Court, and also the Business District, it was observed that based on the observation of Social Science Department of Punjab University, the complex seemed to be devoid of people and the town spaces presented ghost like qualities.

It is interesting to know from the U.S. findings that F.L. Wright's projects of Falling Waters, Guggenheim Museum and Robie House continue to be popular and attract tourists and visitors so also Villa Savoye, designed by

Kanvinde being conferred the Padmashri, 1971



Corbusier in Paris. The above projects are preserved as national monuments by their respective countries. However, Gropius' House, built sometime in the 30's, near Cambridge, Mass., U.S, though very popular initially, however remains presently locked up.

#### Architecture and Democracy

Analyzing architecture with respect to fulfilling basic physical functions, though an important part of design, an equally important aspect of function is the psychological and biological needs and environment associated with it. Spaces create a sense of association as well as a sense of pride and prestige. Though such a thing is a product of feeling and sensitivity of the user there is no rigid formula for interpretation. For a sensitive mind, its assessment is not different from observing any work of art. It should be noted that any work of art or architecture or urban design depends on recognizing the underlying essence of values for its fulfillment. However, interpretation of such values, is a part of the role of the designer and part of his personal cultivation. A course of study in architecture may lead to a degree successfully. However, this is not an end in itself, and the essential role of education is to give direction primarily where the entire life of the professional is directed towards his personal development. For all the above things to happen, education needs someone to charge the minds of students so that students learn to search for themselves in their pursuit towards cultivation.

Architecture has been in a process of evolution all through the historical past. In the present time, backed by new technology and democratic constitutions, it focuses to serve the community essentially. In this situation there is no place for imitating the past in the name of tradition and whatever had existed in the past was the modern of that particular time. The present is different where the goal is mainly to serve the needs of the masses. The functional needs now are those that in addition to meeting normal physical function, also aim at embracing psychological and emotional needs as well. The goal of the professional in our time is to evolve architecture of democracy.

#### Role of Professional

In India, the situation after independence and the government policies towards architecture are presently not conducive to the development of

architecture. What was prevalent before independence, although initially introduced by British Government and although the same was subsequently abandoned by them in their own country, strangely, India is still following such old practices. The present practice in the Government does not give the architect, responsibility and authority as the leader of the team. As a result, his role is limited to paper work only, without contact with the site or acting as a coordinator of the team. Under the situation, he is denied feedback from his endeavour. Public Sector working is not particularly different from above mentioned practices.

So far as development authorities are concerned, barring some exceptions, there are no possibilities, which can offer opportunities and challenges to professionals within the organization backed by bureaucracy. Present working in Government generally dwarfs the personality of a creative mind.

#### Institutions

As far as Council of Architecture and the Indian Institute of Architects is concerned, their role needs to be defined, although they both have a positive role to play. Logically, Council of Architecture being a statutory body, has to issue licenses for registration and practice. This is important, considering the safety, hygiene and health of the population with respect to buildings. Practices in advanced countries like U.S.A demand that professionals pass through a test before they are given registration and the qualifying tests are very difficult to get through in one attempt. The professional Institutes of Architects abroad have responsibility of giving accreditation to educational institutes and grade them. Presently, the Council of Architecture is dominated with eighty percent members who are from PWD background and the remaining from educational institute and other areas. One would expect reorientation of the Council to make an effort to help the architect achieve the needed position of responsibility and authority for fulfilling his role effectively similar to those in other parts of the world.

In post independence India, Architecture was bracketed with institutions of creativity like painting, sculpture and this is so in several progressive countries of the world. Lalit Kala Academy was embracing fine arts like painting, sculptures and architecture initially. When the Government

organized a seminar on architecture, sometime in mid fifties where Nehru himself had participated, it was organized by the Lalit Kala Academy. However, in course of time, following practices in communist countries, Council of Architecture came into existence under the umbrella of Technical Education, although such a thing is not common in European and American practices .

It has been observed time and again that when Government controls organizations associated with creativity with a bureaucratic approach, they keep falling in standards and in course of time become a liability. If Government desires to give patronage to architecture, the right thing would be to have an independent organization supported by the Government, where majority of the members ought to be with outstanding professional achievement, together with other who represent the Government. The role of such a council is not merely a formality and a ritual, but something that will create enthusiasm and confidence amongst professional of the country generally.

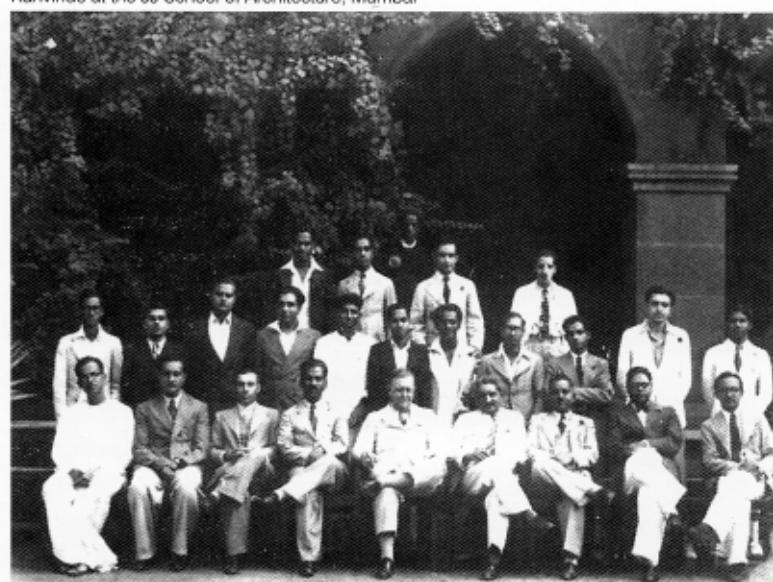
Architectural level of proficiency in the country seems to be of questionable merit primarily because of lack of patronage from the Government. The real role that a professional institute and knowledgeable professionals in the present time, are expected to perform is to communicate with people, press and government in order to create awareness in relation to collective endeavour and physical environment. It is essential for the professional institute to act on important issues forcefully and create public opinion and awareness as is happening amongst the successful world countries essentially to serve the community needs.

#### Education

Education of an Architect for all time to come is an important endeavour. One cannot expect students to come out of college as professional products. Also, it is incorrect to lay down a rigid approach merely by laying down standard curriculum of studies for the whole country and expect results on an all India basis. Whereas students have to learn some subjects mandatorily, in case of certain subjects like design, he is expected to get the right exposure, resulting in his personal cultivation and development with deeper involvement. The key to the education is essentially the quality of teachers. A creative talented teacher is not

expected to be with a school on full time basis. However, his association with the school can contribute to steering and charging minds of the students such that they take direction in life and flower, which is most important. Schools the world over have grown around personalities rather than stipulated curriculum of studies. Appointment of faculty, curriculum of studies and physical facilities although are an essential part of an Institute, very rigid rules associated with institutions do not contribute unless they are flexible. The important thing to recognise is that real educational qualities grow around a personality who commands respect of the profession and whose knowledgeability cannot be questioned and that such a person be left alone to perform to the best of his judgement. School environment ought to create enthusiasm amongst students and faculty and result in pride of place.

Kanvinde at the JJ School of Architecture, Mumbai





Kamvinde 1916 - 2002

#### **Personal Details**

Born on February 9, 1916 at Achara in Maharashtra

Schooling at NMV High School, Pune

Graduated from Sir J J School of Arts, Mumbai

Practiced and lived in New Delhi with his wife Pramodini and children, Sanjay and Sunita.

#### **Qualifications**

M. Arch (Harward, USA)

Fellow, Indian Institute of Architects

Fellow, American Institute of Architects

#### **Experience**

Principal Architect for the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Government of India

Architectural practice in partnership with Shaukat Rai and Morad Chowdhury

#### **Positions held**

Member, Urban Arts Commission, Delhi

President, Indian Institute of Architects

Chairman, Scientific and Finance Committee, CBRI, Roorkee

Member, Executive Council, Structural Engineering Research Centre, Chennai

Member, Committee on International Union of Architects, Hospital Planning

Chairman, TVB School of Habitat Studies, New Delhi

#### **Teaching**

Visiting Professor at-  
Washington University, St Louis, 1965

University of California, Berkley, 1965

University of Illinois, Urbana, 1970-76

University of California, San Louis Obispo, 1973

**Awards**

Padmashri, Government of India, 1975  
Gold Medal, Indian Institute of Architects, 1985  
National Award, Institution of Engineers for Architectural Engineering, 1990  
Great Master National Award, J K Industries, 1993

**Author**

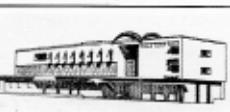
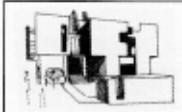
Book titled 'Campus Design In India'

**Work Published**

Design Magazine (Indian)  
DBZ (German)  
Architectural Record (English)  
Architecture + Design (Indian)  
Technique and Architecture (French)  
Indian Architect and builder (Indian)

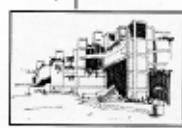
**Exhibition**

Works exhibited along with four South Asian Architects  
by The Architectural League of New York, 1997

 <p><b>1953</b></p> <p>ATIRA Building, Ahmedabad</p>		<p><b>1963</b></p> <p>Darpana Dance Academy, Ahmedabad</p>	<p><b>1966</b></p> <p>Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur</p>	<p><b>1968</b></p> <p>Housing for Rajasthan Atomic Power Project, Kota</p>	<p><b>1970</b></p> <p>Broadway Hotel, Srinagar</p>	<p><b>1974</b></p> <p>Campus Building for National Dairy Development Board, Anand</p>
<p><b>1953</b></p> <p>Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad</p>	<p><b>1963</b></p> <p>Residence of Balkrishna Harivallabhdas, Ahmedabad</p>	<p><b>1966</b></p> <p>Residence for A P Kanvinde, Delhi</p>	<p><b>1968</b></p> <p>Institute of Paper Technology, Saharanpur</p>	<p><b>1970</b></p> <p>Dudhsagar Dairy, Mehsana</p>	<p><b>1974</b></p> <p>ITDC Hotel, Jammu</p>	
 <p><b>1958</b></p> <p>Indian Council of Cultural Research, Delhi</p>	 <p><b>1967</b></p>					

1975	Ashoka Estate Office Building, New Delhi	1983	Office Complex for NDDB, New Delhi
1978	Mahatma Phule Agriculture University, Rahuri	1985	National Institute of Bank Management, Pune
1986	Campus for Rural Management, Anand	1989	Legislative Assembly and High Court, Srinagar
1975	Water Research Centre, Baghdad	1978	University of Agriculture Sciences, Bengluru
1975-85	Major Dairy Plants for NDDB under Operation Flood	1985	Indoor Stadium, Srinagar
1984	Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai	1987	Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Srinagar
1989	Headquarters for Indore Development Authority, Indore	1989	

1990	Proposal for CIDCO Township, Dronagiri, Navi Mumbai	1991	National Insurance Academy, Pune	1992	Anandalaya School, Anand	1993	Structural Engineering Research Centre, Ghaziabad	1994	Medical College Complex, Bambolim	1995	Urban Design for Sub-central Business District, Shahadara	1996	Core Buildings for Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie	1996	Metro Dairy, Kolkata	1996	AITA Tennis Stadium, New Delhi	1997	Office Complex for CIDCO, Dronagiri, Navi Mumbai	1998	Temple and Vedic Institute for ISKCON, Delhi
<b>1990</b>																					
1990	Swiss Development Corporation, New Delhi	1991	National Science Centre, New Delhi	1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	Amul Dairy, Anand	1996	District Headquarters, Sindhudurga	1997		1998	High Security Animal Disease Laboratory, Bhopal		



1999	Integrated School for Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, New Delhi		
	2000	Indian Embassy, Abu Dhabi	
	2000	Mega Dairy, Bengaluru	
	2001	Girls Hostel and CSE Building, IIT Kanpur	
	2003	2003	
	2000	Banas Dairy, Palanpur	2003
		Kali Temple, Kolkata	ISKCON Temple, Varanasi

## CREDITS

Text by Sharvey Dhongde unless otherwise specified

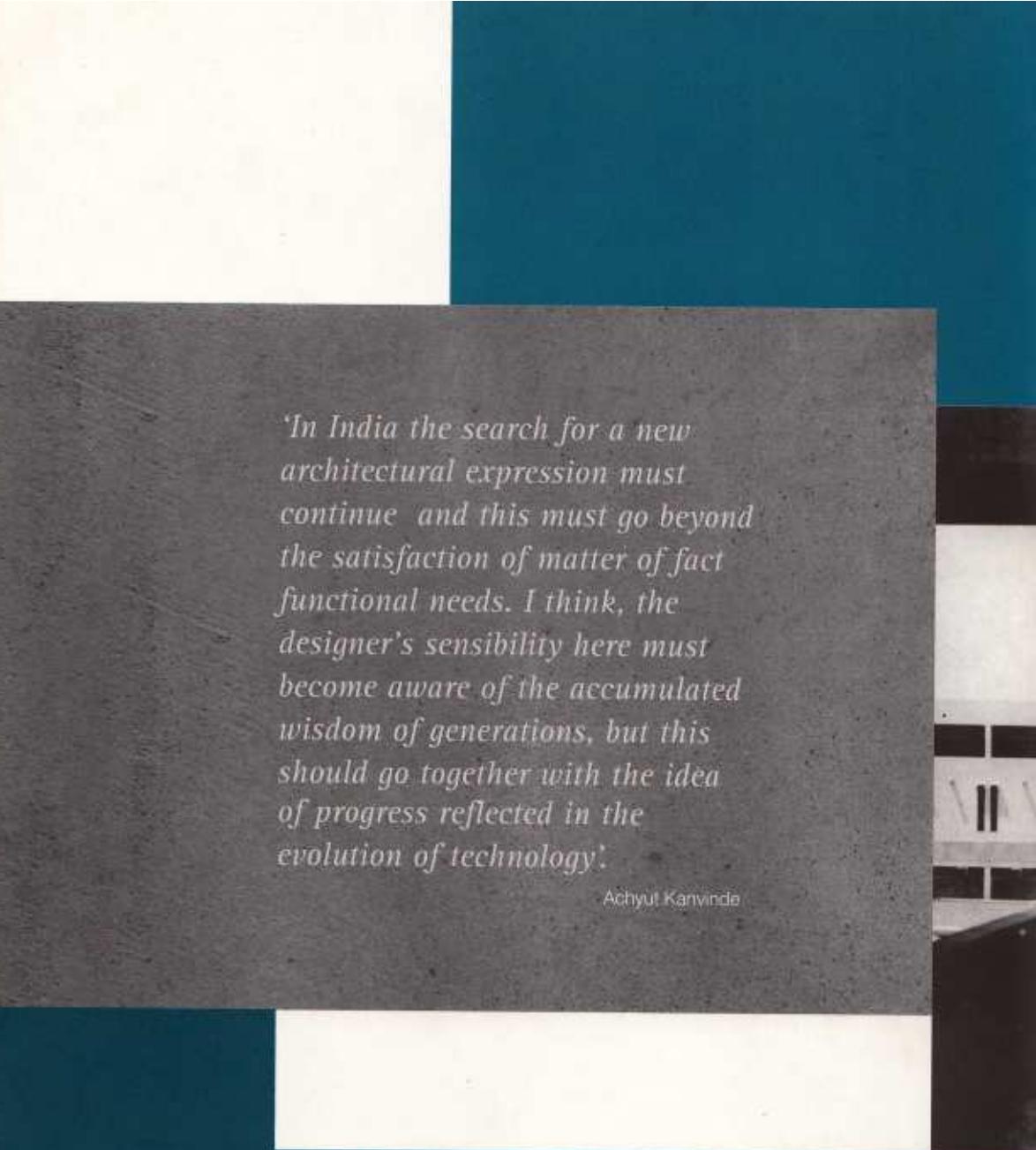
Text of memoirs by Balkrishna Doshi, Charles Correa and Anant Raje and the article by Achyut Kanvinde courtesy of the Journal of the Indian Institute of Architects, May 2001 1999, Vol 66 Issue 04

Text of article by Arun Ogale reproduced from the newspaper article of the same name published in Maharashtra Times, 12 August 1973 with the permission of the author.

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Data entry for Memoirs: Kshitija Karmarkar, Amulya Bhat, Priyam Kudale



*'In India the search for a new architectural expression must continue and this must go beyond the satisfaction of matter of fact functional needs. I think, the designer's sensibility here must become aware of the accumulated wisdom of generations, but this should go together with the idea of progress reflected in the evolution of technology'.*

Achyut Kanvinde



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